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THE LYPHTHORA;

O R,

A TREATISE ON

FEMALE RUIN,

I N I T S

CAUSES, EFFECTS, CONSEQUENCES,
PREVENTION, AND REMEDY;

CONSIDERED ON THE BASIS OF THE

D I V I N E L A W:

Under the following HEADS, viz.

| | |
|---------------|-----------|
| MARRIAGE, | ADULTERY, |
| WHOREDOM, and | POLYGAMY, |
| FORNICATION, | DIVORCE; |

With many other INCIDENTAL MATTERS;

PARTICULARLY INCLUDING

An Examination of the Principles and Tendency of
Stat. 26 GEO. II. c. 33.

COMMONLY CALLED

THE MARRIAGE ACT.

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. I.

THE SECOND EDITION, ENLARGED.

—What in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support;—
That, to the height of this great argument,
I may assert ETERNAL PROVIDENCE,
And justify the ways of God to MEN.

MILTON.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. DODSLEY, in Pall-Mall.

M.DCC.LXXXI.



Preparing for the Press—and speedily will be published,

THELYPHTHORA,

V O L. III.

I. Shewing by what *means*, and by what *degrees*, the *laws* of JEHOVAH concerning *marriage*, were *opposed* and *abrogated*, and a NEW SYSTEM invented and established by CHRISTIAN CHURCHMEN. Extracted from the most authentic *records*, from the earliest times of the CHRISTIAN CHURCH after the APOSTLES, to the *decrees* of the COUNCIL of TRENT, anno 1563, *inclusive*.

II. Observations on the foregoing uninterrupted SERIES of incontestible EVIDENCE, and the WHOLE applied to the subjects of this TREATISE.

III. The true ORIGIN and NECESSITY of MARRIAGE-CEREMONY.

With *many* other INCIDENTAL MATTERS.

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E R R A T A.

- Page 22. n. l. 27. for a solemn contract—read *fidelity*.
23. n. l. 5. ditto.
67. l. 10. for very *feeble*—read comparatively *feeble* to what it once was, before the abolition of the writ *de hæretico comburendo*, 29 Car. II. c. 9.
72. l. 11. for *valiies*—read *vallies*.
79. n. l. 8. for *liver* on the *right* side, and *heart* on the *left*—read *liver* on the *left* side, and *heart* on the *right*.
144. n. l. 15. for 161—read 152.
207. l. 6 from the bottom, for *την*—read *την*.
296. l. 2. n. after p. add 249.
298. l. 28. after p. add 175—177.

TO THE
PRESIDENTS,
VICE-PRESIDENTS,
AND OTHER
GOVERNORS

Of those well-intended Charities, and beneficent Institutions

The *Asylum* — *Misericordia* — *Magdalene* — and *Lock-Hospital*.

THE AUTHOR of the following Treatise cannot fix on a more proper patronage for a work of this kind, than that of those noble and honourable persons, whose compassion on the miseries of the *female sex*, has led them to institute public charities for its preservation and relief.

As our laws are at present framed, women are exposed to *seduction*, *prostitution*, and *ruin*,

almost without controul;—they seem to be looked upon as lawful prey to the lust, treachery, cruelty, and mean artifices of licentious and profligate men, who can seduce and then abandon them at their will.

That a want of good government among us in these respects, is one source of all those evils, which your disinterested and humane endeavours are intended to prevent or remedy, is surely apparent on the slightest consideration.

A system of laws which leaves the horrid crime of *adultery* not only out of the list of its *capital punishments*, but even exempts it, as a *public* offence, from any animadversion whatsoever in our courts of criminal judicature, must be attended with all those mischiefs that arise from the encouragement which impunity affords to vice.

The same may also be observed, with respect to the defenceless state, in which the *weaker sex* in general is left against the *stronger*; so that any man may seduce, and abandon at his pleasure, the unhappy and deluded objects of his brutal appetite.

To

To exhibit a system far different from this—to set forth the *divine law* as the contrivance of *infinite wisdom*, for the security, peace, preservation, and protection of the *female sex*, is the purpose of the following pages.—Were this to be made the basis of our *municipal laws*, it would prove an adequate remedy for all those mischiefs, which, in comparatively few instances, can now only find a partial palliation, from benevolence like yours, but which must, in general, be still the portion of those, whom God's law was formed to protect.

Many of you, my LORDS and GENTLEMEN, are members of the LEGISLATURE; and if, from what shall be said on the matters treated in this book, they should become the subjects of your serious consideration in your *legislative* capacity, the author will gain one desirable end of his labours.

This surely must be allowed—that, in point of fact, the alarming increase of *female prostitution* and *ruin*, calls loudly for some remedy: the *self-evidence* of this, is the very foundation of those benevolent designs,

a 2

which

which distinguish the several public charities to which you so generously contribute.

Let Government adopt the *system* of heavenly wisdom, which adorns the pages of the SACRED VOLUME, and it will find a remedy in its own hands—what that *system* is, it has been the author's most serious endeavour to enquire, and to recommend it to all, but more especially to the consideration of those, whose care, expence, and vigilance, for the good of their fellow-creatures, has occasioned them the trouble of this address from

Their most humble servant,

And ardent well-wisher to their good designs,

THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E

T O T H E

F I R S T E D I T I O N.

THE subjects of the following treatise, being of the utmost importance, have been considered with the most serious attention, and are laid before the reader on the highest authority, that is to say, on the authority of the *holy scriptures*.

Nothing less than this ought, or can, determine on the points herein treated, because they concern, not only the *present*, but *future* welfare of mankind: these, as taken in connection together, must depend, first, on *knowing*, and then on *doing* the will of God. What His *will* is, can only be known from the several revelations, or discoveries, which it hath graciously pleased Him to make of it, *by men, who spake not of themselves, but as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* 2 Pet. i. 21.

To imagine that, without such revelation, mortals can understand, or know the mind and will of God, is an absurdity, even greater than to suppose we can know the thoughts of each other, without any declaration of them either by words or actions. But to admit the necessity of a divine revelation, to receive the scriptures as *that* revelation, and not to make them the only infallible *rule* and *guide*, in all matters which relate to the mind

and will of God therein revealed, is, so far, to lay aside the revelation of God, to make it *void and of none effect*, and to place ourselves in no better situation, than if no such discovery of the mind and will of God had ever been vouchsafed us.

Thus we rob God of His honour, by slighting His *word*, and thus are people led to set up the determinations of human wisdom against it, and expose themselves to *be carried about with every wind of doctrine*, which the folly and superstition of *weak* men, and the wickedness and craft of *designing* men, may happen to invent.

By such means it has been, that so many errors of various kinds have found their way, in all ages, into the *church*, and have maintained their empire over the minds of men. Long *usage* has made them venerable—the prescriptive power of *custom* has given them establishment—and *both* these have prevailed on *human legislatures*, to afford them the awful obligation of their most solemn sanctions.

It cannot want many arguments to prove, that fundry *practices*, as well as *opinions*, which are found among the *heathen* nations, are abhorrent from all our conceptions of propriety, decency, and even humanity itself*.—All these have but one source—*They do err, not knowing the scriptures*.

Where

* I cannot forbear mentioning here that valuable, learned, and excellent work of *John Leland, D. D.* on the *Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation*—wherein that author hath, with a strength of judgment, and depth of learning and erudition peculiar to himself, so proved his point, as to deserve the thanks of all who know

Where *revelation* is received, yet if it be not adhered to as the *only* rule of *faith* and *manners*, and this unreservedly, the opinions and practices of men will be as wide from the mind and will of God, as those of the *Heathen* are. I might here instance in the opinions and practices of the *Pharisees* of old, as well as of many nations called *Christian*, in more modern days, and who are members of that *society* of professing *Christians* which insolently and exclusively styles itself—"THE
 " HOLY APOSTOLICAL and CATHOLIC
 " CHURCH"—amongst whom the most devout are worshipping a *wooden* god, which they call a *crucifix**, and a *breaden* god, which they call the *host*; and, besides these, they worship *saints* and *angels*, and *many such like things they do*. The foundation of all which is still one and the same—*They do err, not knowing the scriptures*; for though the *Papists*

know how to set a just value on the scriptures, as well as of those who would wish to do it. This valuable author says, "It is the mighty advantage of a *written revelation*,
 " that by an impartial consulting it, the deviations from
 " it may be detected, and things may again be reduced
 " to the original standard." Vol. i. p. 453.

* This invention of the crucifix, or image of Christ on the cross, is but old heathenism new vamped. *Maximus Tyrius*, a Platonic philosopher, who was master to *M. Antoninus*, says—"The divine nature stands not in
 " need of images or statues; but the nature and condi-
 " tion of man being very weak, and as far distant from
 " the Divinity as heaven is from earth, framed these
 " signs for itself, and attributed to them the names and
 " titles of the gods"—and he thinks that the legislators acted wisely in contriving images for the people. See *Leland*, vol. i. p. 338. The wise men and *philosophers* pleaded for images as necessary helps to human infirmity. *Ib.* 424.

have the scriptures, yet they do not adopt them as the only rule of *faith* and *worship*. Their fear towards GOD is taught them by the *doctrines and commandments of men**, Is. xxix. 13. which take place of the mind and will of GOD, as revealed in His holy word.

Happy would it be, could *we*, reformed *Protestants*, clear ourselves of this charge in all respects !

To prove that we cannot, in some points of the utmost consequence, is the purpose of the following pages ; which, while the *reader*

* Two of the articles in the famous creed of Pope Pius IV. are as follows :

XIII. I most firmly admit and embrace *apostolical* and *ecclesiastical* traditions, and all other observations and constitutions of the one *catholic and apostolic church*.

XIV. I do admit the holy scriptures in *the same sense* that *holy Mother Church* doth, whose business it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of them, and I will interpret them according to the unanimous consent of the fathers.

The *Papish canon law* frequently affirms—that *the church is above the scriptures*.

Omnis quæ nunc apud nos est scripturæ autoritas ab ecclesiæ autoritate necessario dependet.—“ All the authority which we attribute to the scriptures, necessarily depends on the authority of the church.” *Pighius de Hierar. Eccl. Lib. i. c. 2.* *Eccius*, in his *Enchiridion de Autoritate Ecclesiæ*, maintains—*Ecclesiam esse scripturis antiquiorem, & scripturam non esse authenticam, nisi ecclesiæ autoritate.*—“ The church is more antient than the scriptures, and the scriptures are not authentic, save by the authority of the church.”

Hermannus goes farther, and affirms—*Scripturas tantum valere quantum valent Æsopi fabulæ, nisi accederet ecclesiæ testimonium.*—“ The scriptures are no more to be valued than *Æsop's Fables*, unless it were for the testimony of the church.” See *Hist. of Popery*, vol. i. p. 214.

peruses,

peruses, I could wish him to weigh in the *balance of the sanctuary*, to lay his *Bible* before him, and to call every argument, observation, and doctrine, to the strictest and most severe account, before that unerring tribunal. If he shall find any thing that is *wrong*, or detect any thing that is *false*, let him freely set it down to the *Author's* account. But whatever he shall find agreeable *to*, or clearly proved *by*, the *word* of God, let him not listen to the lying testimony of *prejudice* or *vulgar error* against it, but treasure it up in his mind, for the direction of his own *judgment* and *conscience*, in all situations and conditions of life.

If the *judgment* be mis-led or mis-informed, the more conscientious a man is, the farther will he be led into error, and the more firmly will he be attached to it; therefore it is well for us to listen to the counsel of the *wise man*—Prov. iv. 7. “WISDOM is the
“ principal thing, therefore get WISDOM;
“ and with all thy getting get UNDERSTAND-
“ ING.”

As to differences, or even *errors*, (if *mistakes* about indifferent matters can be *so* called) where mere outward *forms* are concerned, and those of human invention, the *Author* desires *to think*, and *to let think*, and where-soever the scriptures are *silent*, to be *so* too. He does not esteem it worth his while to expend a single drop of ink in such controversies. He does not suppose, that, had he lived in the second *century*, when the *Roman* and *Asiatic* Christians quarrelled about the
keeping

keeping of *Easter*, and ran to such indecent lengths of animosity and discord, as might make the very *heathen* blush, he would have ventured a single scratch of his finger, to have had it decided whether it was to be held “on the fourteenth day after the first moon in the new year,” or “on the same stated day in every year,” or “on the first Sunday after the first full moon.” All this rout was made to very little purpose: and had the *Author* been weak enough to have entered into the dispute, had he sided with the *Asiatics*, and been excommunicated by Pope *Victor* for his pains, it would not, according to his present notions, have given him a moment’s uneasiness.

But where the peace and well-being (I had almost said the very *being*) of society are concerned, where disorders, of the most malignant kind, have infected the general mass, to the destruction of millions down to this moment, and threaten the destruction of millions yet unborn, and those chiefly from among the most defenceless part of the human species; when the lust, treachery, cruelty, and villainy of men, are let loose to ravage, as they can, on the weakness and credulity of helpless women; and when all this is apparently the effect of abolishing those parts of the *divine law*, which were evidently made to prevent it, and the introduction of a *system* of *human* invention is the means of its daily increase; too much cannot be said to point out the cause of the *disease*, and to lead to the *remedy*. The former
is

is from the substitution of the *wisdom of man*, in the place of the *wisdom of God*; the *latter* can only be discovered and rendered effectual, by restoring the *wisdom of God* to its due place in our esteem, and by making it, as it is found revealed to us in the scriptures, the *basis* of our *municipal* laws—the *line* of our conduct—the *rule* of our *obedience*.

Perhaps some may think, that there are *points* handled and discussed in this *book*, which had better been left under the clouds of obscurity which have long overwhelmed them, and hidden them from vulgar observation, lest disputes should be raised, and abuses committed by the perversions of the evil and licentious. It is written concerning the scriptures themselves, that, to some they are the *savour of life unto life**, and unto others the *savour of death unto death*. 2 Cor. ii. 16. And again—that the *unlearned and unstable wrested the epistles of Paul, as also the other scriptures, to their own destruction*. 2 Pet. iii. 16. As therefore there is nothing in this *book*, which is not to be found in those scriptures, as to the *points* above hinted at, the Author ventures it forth, confiding in Him who hath said—*As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall My word be, that*

* Haurit lethiferum bufo de flore venenum,
Quo mel nectareum sedula promit apes.

At the same flow'r the *toad* and *bee* may meet,
That suck the *poison*—this exhausts the *sweet*.

goeth forth out of My mouth : it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it. Is. lv. 10, 11.

He cannot be of the mind of *Synesius* the *Platonist*, who was raised to be a *Bishop* in the *Christian* church, but continued to be a determined *Platonist*; and had so far imbibed the spirit and doctrine of that school, as to declare his sentiments thus—“ As darkness is
 “ most proper and commodious for those
 “ who have weak eyes, so I hold that * *lyes*
 “ and *fictions* are useful to the people, and
 “ that *truth* would be hurtful to those who
 “ are not able to bear its light and splendor.”
 And he adds—“ If the laws of the church
 “ would dispense with it, that he would
 “ *philosophize* at home, and talk abroad in the
 “ common strain, preaching up the general
 “ and received *fables*.” See note z, *Leland*,
 vol. ii. p. 344.

The antient philosophers had an *exoteric* doctrine—*ἐξωτερικόν*—which they openly taught to the people; and an *esoteric* doctrine—*ἐσωτερικόν*—which they taught privately to their select disciples, whom they let into the secrets

* *Maximus Tyrius* saith—that “ a lye is often profitable and advantageous to men, and truth hurtful.” So *Plato*, and others of the *philosophers*—the *Stoics* especially, who held that “ a wise man might make use of a lye for many conveniences and managements in life.” See *Leland*, vol. ii. p. 220. Many of the early *Fathers* and *Christians* adopted the same principle, which has been called by the softer term of *pious fraud*, and would lye by wholesale—but this *only for the good of the church*—however, this has never been got rid of, as *Papery* can fully attest. See *Mosheim*, vol. i. p. 200.

of their scheme. It was a maxim among them, that “it was lawful to deceive the people for the public good.” *Ib.* 342—3. So the sect of *Foe* in *China*, have an *exterior* and *interior* doctrine with regard to a *future state*—they publicly preach it up to the people, but their *interior* doctrine rejects it. See *Ib.* 344, note z.

Such is human prudence and wisdom!—but the *divine wisdom* saith—*He that bath My word, let him speak My word faithfully.* Jer. xxiii. 28. *There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in the light; and what ye hear in the ear, that preach (κηρύξατε, proclaim, publish) upon the house-tops.* Matt. x. 26, 27. Comp. Mark iv. 21, 22. *Truth* is like him that doeth the truth—it cometh to the light, that its deeds may be manifest, that they are wrought in God. *Error*, like every one that doth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest its deeds should be reprov'd. John iii. 20, 21.

God never revealed any thing but that it should be known. When men want to conceal any part of divine revelation from the knowledge of others, it is too frequently with a purpose of preventing the detection of some errors in *human systems*, which, from some sinister view or other, they dread the discovery of. Thus the church of *Rome*, jealous of the light of scripture, knowing that the whole dominion of *popes* and *priests* over the understandings and consciences of
the

the laity is founded in ignorance, keep, as far as they can, the scriptures out of their hands.

Others there are, who, from well-meant, but mistaken, zeal, for principles which they have been taught to *venerate*, dread that these should be attacked; as thinking the cause of *religion itself*, is involved with the *supposed truth* of what they are accustomed to believe. There can be no doubt, that when our *reformers* first attacked the POPE's *supremacy*, the worship of the *Virgin Mary*, the *celibacy of priests*, and other pious lyes and forgeries of the *church of Rome*, many *devout* and *zealous* people thought, that *religion itself* was, like *the ark* of old, 1 Sam. iv. 10, 11. about to be delivered into the hands of the * *Philistines*; and cried out, like *Micah*, when the *Danites* took away his *Levite* and his *Tera-phim*—*Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest—and what have I more?* See *Judges* xviii. 24.

If there be any thing in the *Bible* which ought to be *concealed*, it would be no very hard matter to prove, that it ought never to have been *revealed*. But as it often happens with private individuals, that they are afraid of looking too narrowly into the scripture, for fear of meeting with something to shake their preconceived opinions and prejudices;

* In 1547, Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, said, "that he thought the removing images, was on design to subvert *religion* and the *state* of the *world*."—*Burnet*, Preface to *Hist. Ref.* vol. ii. p. 11.

So is it with all public and *national systems*. As these have been fashioned by *human contrivance*, they are not, for very obvious reasons, over-fond of too narrow a scrutiny on the single footing of *divine revelation*; lest, as they are formed like the *feet of the image* in *Nebuchadnezzar's dream*, which were *part of iron, and part of clay*; so these being composed of the *heterogeneous mixture of divine wisdom and human contrivance*, a too curious investigator should, like the *STONE* there mentioned—*fall upon them, and break them to pieces*.

The Author of the following sheets professes himself a *Free-thinker*; not in the usual sense of that word, as what he has written must abundantly testify, but as an assertor of that right, which every reasonable creature is invested with, to *search, think, and judge* for himself. He therefore has endeavoured to lay some points, which he cannot but esteem of the utmost consequence, before the world, that others may exercise *their* privilege as the Author hath done *his*.

As for the *abuse* which any subject herein treated may be liable to—What is not *abused*? What in nature, providence, or revelation, has not been *abused* and perverted to some vile purpose or other? The very *GOSPEL OF PEACE* hath been *abused*, to sanctify fraud, violence, oppression, and persecution—to justify massacres, tortures, murders, even to men's *roasting alive* their fellow-creatures, and *thinking they did God service!* insomuch
that,

that, were we to judge of the great HEATH of our *holy religion*, by the *abuse* which has been made of His authority, we should invert what He says, *Luke ix. 56.* and imagine, that He came *not to SAVE* men's lives, *but to DESTROY them.* Even the *grace of our GOD* has been, and *is* by many, *turned into lasciviousness.* (See *Jude iv.*) But what does all this prove? Nothing but the ignorance, perverseness, cruelty, and wickedness of human nature; and that *corruptio optimi fit pessima*: but it does not prove, that the GOD of heaven, who foresaw and foreknew such *abuses*, should not have revealed His *mind* and *will* to mortals; nor that *any part* of that revelation should be concealed, suppressed, or hidden from the eyes of men, for fear of its being *abused.* For this may be taken as a certain rule, that no *abuse* of the scriptures ever yet happened from a real understanding and knowledge of their contents, but from an ignorance, either in ourselves, or imposed on us by the design and artifice of others.

The grand question to be tried is, “ whether a SYSTEM, filled with *obligation* and
 “ *responsibility*, of men to women, and of
 “ women to men, even unto *death* itself,
 “ and this established by INFINITE WISDOM,
 “ is not better calculated to prevent the ruin
 “ of the *female sex*, with all its horrid consequences,
 “ both to the public and individuals, than a SYSTEM of *human contrivance*,
 “ where neither *obligation* nor *responsibility* are to be found, either of men to
 “ women,

“ women, or of women to men, in instances
 “ of the most important concern to *both*, but
 “ more especially to the *weaker sex*?”

The whole of the evidence on both sides is faithfully collected, and laid open, without any reserve or disguise, in this book—let every READER look upon himself as impanelled on the *jury*—let him impartially hearken to the *cause*—and a true *verdict* give according to the *evidence*.

P R E F A C E

T O T H E

S E C O N D E D I T I O N .

Notwithstanding the disadvantages under which this work has laboured, a *second edition* has long been called for, and now makes its appearance, in as expeditious a manner as the necessary delay of printing would permit.

The *author* would therefore fain hope, that the book has made its way by dint of that intrinsic *truth* which it contains—the *importance* of the subjects treated—the *important ends* proposed—and that conformity to the *oracles of God*, which it professedly makes the *basis* of its contents.

A work which militates against the received *notions*, long *customs*, and inveterate *prejudices* of mankind, can expect but little quarter from the world in general, and, of course, but little of that sort of *candor*, which is shewn to performances of *authors* who write on the *popular* side of a question.—This was fully experienced at the *Reformation*

mation—when *Luther*, and others, published against the ridiculous fopperies and gross villainies of *Popery*, they had *volumes* written against them, in which they were represented in every odious light imaginable.—They were “*heretics—antichrists—factors for the devil*”—and, in short, all that was *bad*;—but the abuse of their adversaries had one good effect—it proved how much at a loss these were for fair argument, grounded on scripture-evidence, and how little able they were to meet their *opponents* with the *weapons* of a *spiritual warfare*. (See 2 Cor. x. 4.) Seldom does *abuse* serve any better purpose in *controversy*, than to create a very strong presumption, that those who *give* it have nothing better on their side, and therefore are in the *wrong*, and that those who receive it are, therefore, in the *right*.

With regard to the article of *abuse* of an *author*, if it be of the *personal* kind, let him set it down as so much gained; if it lights upon his *book*, let the book answer for *itself*, and if it cannot do *this*, let him set down the abuse which it meets with, as what it *deserves*.

Another expedient, which some *critics* have used to depreciate a work, is, to separate some given *subject* from the *rest*, destroy its connection with the main argument, and then, by selecting, in like manner, detached sentences or paragraphs, make these appear to their readers in a light not only different

from the author's intention, but diametrically opposite to his whole meaning.

Owing to this it has been, that the subject of *polygamy* has been selected, and the *indiscriminate practice* of it said to be recommended by the author of *Thelyphthora*. To guard against this, in the plain and express manner which he has done (vol. ii. p. 174—177. 288, and n. and 335, n.) he is sorry to find was to little purpose: these passages were overlooked, whether intentionally or not, is to be left to those who best know. However, let the whole that the author has written on the subject be taken fairly and candidly together, and it will appear, that nothing more is said, than is warranted by *scripture, nature, and reason*, and to prove that the *indiscriminate* prohibition of it in all cases, however circumstanced—which is no where warranted by the law of God—is one source of *public prostitution*—which, *Montesquieu* truly says, “ may “ be looked upon as the greatest of misfor- “ tunes in a popular state.”

I know no book, the *Bible* itself not excepted, which may not be abused by partial quotation;—and by that which is one consequence of it, *misrepresentation*.—We may prove *atheism* on *David*, as having said, Ps. xiv. 1. *There is no God*;—a recommendation of *drunkenness* from Ps. civ. 15. where he says, *Wine maketh glad the heart of man*;—or we may suppose, that the prophet *Isaiah*, and the apostle *Paul*, meant to encourage the licentiousness of a *Sçavoir vivre* club—by saying
—*Let*

—*Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.*
 If. xxii. 13. 1 Cor. xv. 32.

Something like the *disingenuousness* which would attend such proofs as these, has attended the misrepresentation of the author's treating *polygamy*.—He has maintained its forming a part of the *divine plan*, which was so evidently calculated for the preservation of the *female* sex from desertion and *prostitution*—but by a *part* only of what is said on the subject being taken, and placed in another point of view, he is accused of recommending *polygamy* as an *indiscriminate practice*, to the subversion of the peace and domestic happiness of every family in the *kingdom*—an idea as foreign from his purpose, as it was from the *Apostle's* (1 Tim. v. 23.) to make *Timothy* a *wine-bibber* (ὀινοποτης)—See Prov. xxiii. 20. Matt. xi. 19.—when he exhorted him to —*drink no longer water, but to use a little wine for his stomach's sake, and his often infirmities*. Thus *polygamy* is mentioned in no other light, throughout this treatise, but as * *expedient* in some cases, † *necessary* in others, to prevent mischiefs of an infinitely more deplorable kind, both to individuals in particular, and to the public in general, than can possibly arise from every man's being obliged to keep, maintain, and provide for, as the scripture has commanded, the women he *seduces*—but in order to this, its *lawfulness* must be proved, for if it be disallowed of God—there is an end of all questions upon the subject, and we

* See vol. ii. p. 178.

† See Exod. xxii. 16. Deut. xxii. 28, 29.

must sit down contented under the present ruinous state of things, which is every day increasing the licentiousness of our men, the destruction of our *women*, and the * *depopulation* of the land.

As for partial and unfair representation, it has been an usual way of injuring arguments which do not easily admit of plain and fair answers.

Thus the *Papists* served *Erasmus*, on his publishing his “*Translation and Paraphrase*” “on the New Testament.” A great clamour was raised against him by the *faculty* of *divinity* at *Paris*, as before at *Basil*; and “*Natalis Bedda*, a doctor of divinity, who was “at that time *Syndic* of the *faculty*, collected “several propositions, which, as to the full “import and general sense of them, were “lame and imperfect, being separated from “what went before, and from what followed after, and thereby might be taken “in an ill sense; whereas, if they were red “with what went before, and what followed after, it would be found they were “sound and orthodox.” And thus at length a decree was passed against him, and “those “*doctors* who were on the side of *Erasmus*, “were obliged to hold their peace, lest, by

* We were lately told, in one of the public prints, how truly I cannot say, that—“a noble Lord stated in “the House of Commons, with his usual accuracy, that “the decrease of people in this country, within these “last 90 years, has been ONE MILLION EIGHT HUNDRED THOUSAND.” Surely this must be an exaggeration—but yet it might be worth while to examine into the *increase or decrease* of the people.

“speaking

“ speaking their thoughts freely, they should
 “ become odious, and their lives be made
 “ uneasy.” See DU PIN, Cent. 16. p.
 267—8. *Eng. Transl.*

What *Erasmus* wrote on the treatment
 which he met with from many quarters, on
 account of his publication, deserves our no-
 tice, as containing a proper admonition to
 those who *condemn*, because they read with
prejudice; and to those who are *profligate*
 enough to *condemn*, without reading *at all*.

“ Sic oportet ad librum legendum acce-
 “ dere lectorem, ut solet ad convivium con-
 “ viva civilis. Convivator annititur omnibus
 “ satisfacere: & tamen siquid apponitur,
 “ quod hujus aut illius palato non respon-
 “ deat, urbanè vel dissimulant, vel probant
 “ etiam, ne quid contristent convivatorem.
 “ Quis enim eum convivam ferat, qui tan-
 “ tùm hoc animo veniat ad mensam, ut car-
 “ pens quæ apponuntur, ne vescatur ipse,
 “ nec alios vesci finat?

“ Et tamen his quoque reperias incivi-
 “ liores, qui palam, qui sine fine damnant
 “ ac lacerant opus, *quod nunquam legerint*.
 “ Atque hoc sane faciunt quidam, qui se
 “ *Christianæ pietatis doctores* profitentur, &
 “ *religionis antistites*; cum sit plus quam sy-
 “ *cophanticum*, damnare quod nescias.”

As I have too much reason to think that
 some of the *unlearned*, as well as the *learned*,
 stand much in need of being acquainted with
 the *above*, I will give it in *English*.

“ A reader should come to the perusal of

“ a book, as a courteous guest comes to a
 “ feast. The giver of the feast does his en-
 “ deavour to satisfy all; yet, if any thing be
 “ brought to table, which may not be
 “ agreeable to the palate of this or that per-
 “ son, they politely dissemble their dislike,
 “ or even *approve*, rather than *grieve* him
 “ who has invited them. For who could
 “ bear with that guest, who comes to the
 “ table only with a disposition to find fault,
 “ and neither to partake himself, nor suffer
 “ others to partake of the entertainment?

“ Yet you may find others more *uncivil*
 “ than these, who openly, and without end,
 “ will condemn and tear a work to pieces,
 “ which they have never read. And *some* do
 “ this, who profess themselves *teachers of*
 “ *Christian piety*, and *eminent* * *professors of*
 “ religion. Whereas, to condemn that of
 “ which you are ignorant, is beyond the
 “ baseness of the † *basest informer*.”

I could easily make some *strictures* on the

* *Antistes* properly denotes a *chief priest*, *prelate*, or *bishop*: but is also used for any man *eminent* among others. AINSWORTH.

Erasmus probably used it in the *former sense*. The *author* uses it in the *latter*, for a *reason* which *some* of his *readers* have *more cause*, than he wishes they had, to see the propriety of.

† *Sycophanticum*, rendered literally, would afford no information to the *unlearned* reader; the term is therefore *paraphrased*, in such a manner, as to give an idea of the sort of people which the *Greeks* called *Sycophants*, and, of course, what *Erasmus* means by *Sycophanticum*. For the derivation and meaning of *Sycophants* among the *Athenians*, see *Chambers' Dict.*

above

above passage, but I forbear saying any more, than *Erasmus* has said for me.

I would recommend it, however, to all, who have, or shall criticise on this *work*, to be very certain they *understand* it; for I have a shrewd suspicion, that this has not been the case with *all* its *readers*; perhaps I might name some highly-respected characters, that have been *foremost* in very *unbecoming language* relative to *certain subjects* of it. If *those subjects* are *not* treated, in a direct consonance with the *law* of GOD, as revealed by *Moses*, they have my free liberty to say what they please; but otherwise, let them take care, lest their *wit*, *raillery*, and *pious sarcasms*, do not ultimately tend to vilify and ridicule the GOD *that made them*—let them beware, lest that question, once put on a very serious occasion, be not put to them, in *an hour* when they will find more difficulty, than they seem at present aware of, to answer it—*Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? And against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL.* 2 Kings xix. 22. Let them remember, that He will not only *convince the ungodly, of the hard speeches, which they have spoken against Him*, (Jude xv.) but, sooner or later, will deal with persons of a more decent character, and whose sayings have borne the semblance of religious zeal, after their folly, in that they have not spoken of Him the thing that is right. See Job xlii. 8.

As to the *Ladies*, who, I am told, are *extremely*

tremely displeased, I hope I have too much good manners, to presume to enter into any controversy with *them*; only I would recommend to them also, a very serious attention to what is said in the preceding *paragraph*—and to take great care, that their *objections* do not fall on HIM, who knew the situation HE had placed them in, when HE made His *laws* for the protection of their *frail sisters* from ruin and destruction.—They will, however, permit me to assure them, that if the *author* had found any thing in the *divine œconomy*, which tended to support the *pride* of one part of the *sex*, at the expence of the *ruin and prostitution* of the *other*, he would most faithfully have declared it; and if his fair *readers* should *search the scriptures* with an intent of finding some such thing, he would very earnestly caution them, on *whom* they lay the *blame* of the disappointment which will most certainly attend their enquiries.

The additions which have been made in this *edition*, are such, as tend to elucidate the passages where they occur, and to shew the respect and attention, which the *author* most gratefully pays, to any pertinent and candid observations, which have fallen in his way.

I now conclude this *Preface*, with the contents of a paper which I received from a very respectable *Clergyman*, who was *candid* enough to let his *prejudices* submit to his *judgment*, and had *honesty* enough to *own it*.

The following *Queries* contain so accurate an *epitome* of the work, and are so much to the

the purpose, as to save the *author* the trouble of introducing them, with any farther remarks whatsoever.

“ As the subject of a late publication, entitled “ Thelyphthora ; or, a Treatise on Female Ruin,” &c. “ is much misunderstood, and misrepresented by many people, who have, some of them, never read it at all, and the rest but partially, and not without prejudice, and therefore oppose it ; ’tis judged best to send its opposers the following *Questions*, for them to answer : the doing of this, ’tis thought, will bring the matter to a point, enter upon particulars, and be a means to discover where, and with whom, *truth* is, and where, and with whom, *error* is.

“ 1. Are the mischievous, shocking crimes of whoredom, fornication, and adultery, got to an enormous and increasing height, in this land, and is the land defiled and deluged by them, or not ? and is the frown, or curse of God upon the land, or is it not ?

“ 2. Is it needful, and is it our bounden duty, to cry aloud against these God-provoking, and nation-ruining sins, and to seek a remedy against this monstrous evil, or is it not ?

“ 3. Is there any thing destructively horrible in the lives, and any thing shockingly dreadful in the deaths of abandoned women, alias, common prostitutes, or is there not ?

“ 4. What

“ 4. What *number*, how many thousands
 “ are there of these miserable creatures in
 “ our land? and have they any evil effect on
 “ the male sex, or not?

“ 5. Do our laws, as they now stand,
 “ hinder this ruinous evil, or do they not?
 “ and *can* they, or *can* they *not*?

“ 6. Do our laws encourage, or discour-
 “ age, honourable marriage, or celibacy?
 “ encourage, or discourage population?

“ 7. Do our laws, in any cases, put asun-
 “ der those, whom God has joined together,
 “ and keep together those, whom He has
 “ ordered to be put asunder, or do they
 “ not?

“ 8. Is there any *remedy* at all spoken of
 “ in God's word, against the great evil of
 “ lewdness; and if there be, what is that
 “ particular remedy?

“ 9. Does God, in His word, order, that
 “ whores, adulterers and adulteresses shall
 “ be *put to death*, or does He not? See Le-
 “ viticus xx. 10. Deut. xxii. 21, 22.

“ 10. In particular instances of some per-
 “ sons injuring others, does God, in his
 “ word, enjoin any *recompence* that the in-
 “ jurers and offenders shall make the injured,
 “ or does He not?

“ 11. Are some of our laws, in this land,
 “ framed upon the Divine laws, in the above-
 “ mentioned particular, and do they inflict
 “ punishment on some transgressors and of-
 “ fenders, in any cases, according to the
 “ spirit of the divine laws, or not?

“ 12. Is

“ 12. Is there any *particular* recompence
 “ that God, in his word, orders an *unmar-*
 “ *ried* man to make a virgin whom he has
 “ defiled, or is there not? and if there be,
 “ what is it? See Exodus xxii. 16, 17.
 “ Deut. xxii. 28, 29.

“ 13. Is there any particular recompence
 “ that a *married* man is enjoined to make the
 “ virgin, whom he has defiled, or is there
 “ not? If there be, what is it? Is the vir-
 “ gin, in the above case, to receive a recom-
 “ pence, and the virgin, in this, to receive
 “ none, and to be abandoned? See the above
 “ scriptures.

“ 14. Is our marriage-ceremony, in the
 “ church, so of the essence of marriage as to
 “ *constitute* marriage; and, therefore, none
 “ are married in God's sight, but what are
 “ joined together, by a priest, with that ce-
 “ remony?

“ 15. Is the marriage of the people called
 “ *Quakers*, in this land, marriage *in* God's
 “ *sight*? and also according to our laws?

“ 16. Were the marriages performed by
 “ justices of the peace, in the last century,
 “ for eighteen years together, marriages in
 “ God's sight, and according to our laws?

“ 17. In what way, or by what form, were
 “ all those people of old joined together,
 “ whose marriages are recorded in scripture-
 “ history?

“ 18. In what way, or by what form
 “ were Christians married for upwards of a
 “ thousand

“ thousand years immediately after the birth
“ of Christ.

“ 19. Was our church marriage-cere-
“ mony the consequence of Pope Innocent
“ the 3d, putting marriage, as a sacrament,
“ into the hands of Popish priests, or was
“ it not ?

“ 20. What reasons can be assigned for
“ God’s permitting so many people, and,
“ particularly, some of his distinguished
“ saints of old, to live allowedly in the
“ practice of *Polygamy*, and to die, with-
“ out ever reproofing them, calling them
“ to repentance, (if it was a *sin*) and with-
“ out their ever expressing any sorrow for
“ it, and shewing any evidences at all of
“ their repentance ? And if God’s word be
“ the rule of our conduct, and if the ex-
“ ample of these saints be written for our
“ learning, what are we to learn from them,
“ respecting their polygamy ?

“ 21. If these saints of old lived and died
“ in *sin*, by living and dying in the allowed
“ practice of *polygamy*, what is the *name* of
“ the sin ? By what term is it to be distin-
“ guished ? Was it adultery ? or, whore-
“ dom ? or, fornication ? Was their com-
“ merce licit or illicit ? What command-
“ ment did they sin against ? Were they
“ adulterers, whoremongers, or fornicators ?
“ What does the scripture-history of the
“ lives and deaths of these saints teach us to
“ call this their practice ?

“ 22. Were

“ 22. Were Hannah, and Rachel, and
 “ (after Uriah’s death) Bathsheba, whores or
 “ adulteresses ; or, were they lawful and ho-
 “ noured wives ? How are they spoken of,
 “ and how were they treated, as the scrip-
 “ ture-history informs us ?

“ 23. Were Joseph, Samuel, and Solo-
 “ mon, bastards, or honourable legitimate
 “ sons ? In what character were they spo-
 “ ken of and treated ? Did God shew favour
 “ to them, or dislike of them ?

“ 24. Were not Hannah, Rachel, and
 “ Bathsheba, whores, or adulteresses ; and
 “ Joseph, Samuel, and Solomon, bastards,
 “ according to the *laws of our land* ?

“ 25. Are there any things unscriptural,
 “ as well as impolitic, in the late act of Par-
 “ liament for the preventing clandestine
 “ marriages, and if there be, what are they,
 “ and why ? And why did half the House of
 “ Lords, save one single voice, move for a
 “ *repeal* of this act ?

“ 26. In what way can a stop be put to
 “ these following ruinous, detestable, hor-
 “ rible, and national evils ; namely, brothel-
 “ keeping, murdering of infants by seduced
 “ women ; pregnant virgins committing of
 “ suicide ; medicine-taking to procure abor-
 “ tion ; the venereal disease ; seduction ; prof-
 “ titution ; whoredom ; adultery ; and all
 “ the deplorable evils accompanying and fol-
 “ lowing the mischievous sin of lewdness in
 “ this land ? If God’s law respecting the
 “ commerce of the sexes, was observed, and
 “ if

“ if the laws of our land were to enforce
 “ that, might we not expect His blessing on
 “ such means used to accomplish so needed
 “ and desirable an end ?

“ 27. On supposition that polygamy be a
 “ practice disallowed of God, is the *other* part
 “ of the scheme for preventing the horrible
 “ evils of lewdness in our land, scriptural and
 “ practical, or not ?

“ 28. Is the design and aim of the book
 “ to hinder lewdness, and its deplorable ef-
 “ fects, or not ?

“ After these questions are answered, not
 “ in a trifling, superficial, and merely spe-
 “ cious and declamatory manner, but in a
 “ full, plain, fair, scriptural, and reasonable
 “ manner ; and the answers are open and
 “ honest, free from paltry subterfuge, and
 “ all deceiving equivocation, and reservation,
 “ and all the answers are founded on truth
 “ and facts, we shall then notice what the
 “ *consequences* will be of such a right mode
 “ of answering these questions ; and so find
 “ out, whether the arguments in “ Thelyph-
 “ thora” be scriptural, reasonable, and defen-
 “ sible, or not ; whether the scheme in that
 “ book has a good or a bad tendency ; whether
 “ to be reprobated, or received ; and whether
 “ the friends and abettors of it are friends
 “ or foes to their country ? the cause of God ?
 “ the temporal, spiritual, and eternal wel-
 “ fare of their fellow-creatures ?”

THE LYPHTHORA.

INTRODUCTION.

TO call in question the truth of long-received *opinions*, is a sort of employment which *few* chuse to be engaged in; not only from the natural indolence and supineness of the human mind, but from the reception which such attempts are likely to meet with from the *generality*, who are always jealous of whatsoever may seem an attack on *principles* which have the sanction of *antient custom*; and from thence, even of *laws* themselves, for their support.

We need but look * back to the times of the *Reformation*, in order to see this abundantly

* If we carry our researches into the history of the Heathen world, we shall find that it was an established maxim adopted by *Plato*, and in which all the other *philosophers* without exception concurred, that “every nation should worship the gods according to the established laws and customs, to which also every private person in his own practice ought to conform.” By this artifice of the *devil* (who is emphatically styled the “god of this world, that blinds the minds of men,” 2 Cor. iv. 4.) not only the Heathen world, but a great part of the *Christian* world, hath been enslaved in chains of error

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dantly verified. Our *Reformers* no sooner began the salutary work of enquiry after *truth*, and its infallible consequence, the detection of error, than the whole *Christian world*, so called, was in arms against them. *Councils* were summoned, *synods* held, and their sentences were, in substance, what that of the “*men, brethren, and fathers,*” of the *Jews* was against that supposed *innovator*, *Paul of Tarsus*, when they said, “*Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live.*” *Acts* xxii. 22.

When *Paul* and *Silas* were apprehended, and carried before the magistrates at *Philippi*, the charge against them ran in the following terms:—“*These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, and teach customs which are not lawful for us to observe, being Romans,*”

But why was it not *lawful* for the *Romans* to observe what *Paul* had been teaching? Because of the contrariety of the *Roman* laws

and delusion. On the footing of this maxim it was, that when *Socrates*, who was the wisest of the *philosophers*, attempted to awaken his countrymen to a more rational and spiritual sense of *divine things* than they had been accustomed to, he was accused at *Athens* by *Anytus* and *Melitus*, that “he did not believe those to be gods which the city believed, and that he introduced other new gods”—for this he was put to death. How many *Christians* have been put to death on a similar principle, let the annals of those declare who are now crying, *How long, O LORD, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth!* *Rev.* vi. 9, 10.

So *Cicero* binds it as a duty upon the people “to follow the religion of their ancestors.” *Cic. de Leg.* lib. ii. c. 8.—*ritus familiæ patrumque servanto.*

and superstitions to God's word—for a like reason, the *Reformers* taught things which it was not *lawful* for the subjects of this kingdom *to observe*, because the system of the laws of church and state were opposite to the *Bible*—and, as far as they are so still, so far will a writer against them be deemed no better than a *troubler of the land*, and a teacher of *customs which it is not LAWFUL for us to observe*. He likewise stands fair for being called one of those, who would *turn the world upside down*. See Acts xvi. 20, 21. xvii. 6.

Had not *Luther* quarrelled with *Pope Leo X.* and brought himself into difficult and dangerous circumstances, it is not impossible but that the light of that great *reformer* had remained hidden under the * *buskel* of *monkery*. However, it pleased God to order it otherwise, and, in his gracious providence, to over-rule *Luther's* situation, for the investigation and promulgation of the *faith once delivered to the saints*. Jude 3. This extraordinary man was led to search, think, and judge for himself; and (drawing his *artillery* from the inexhaustible *arsenal* of the *holy scriptures*) first to † attack, and then to overthrow,

* Matth. v. 15.

† I would observe, that *John Wickliffe*, an *Englishman*, educated at *Oxford* in the reign of *Edward III.* has the honour of being the first person in *Europe* who publickly called in question, and boldly refuted, those doctrines, which had passed for *certain* during so many ages. Guth. Gram. vol. i. 247. For this he was sorely persecuted during his life; and after his death, his bones, which had been buried forty-one years, were dug up

throw, *errors*, which had been received as the most sacred *truths* for ages, and which had been maintained, by every support, which the credulity and superstition of mankind, aided by laws and powers *ecclesiastical* and *civil*, could give them.

From whence I would infer, that no *opinions* or doctrines whatsoever, receive any *conclusive* proof of their truth, from the suffrages of men, however wise, learned, or however supported by human *maxims*, *customs*, or *laws*. To take it for granted, that truth must be where there are these supports, is at once to give up our privilege of enquiring and judging for ourselves; and, if so, we might as well have been born without *reason* and *judgment* as with them. Upon such a principle as this, a *Mohammedan* has as good * a reason for the truth of the *Koran*, as we have for the truth of the *Bible*; for the former hath as much the *customs* and *laws* of *Turkey* for

and burned. This by a solemn decree of the council of *Constance*. See Fox's *Martyrs*, vol. i. 529. He was the first translator of the New Testament from the *Latin Vulgate* into *English*. He died about 1387. Jortin *Rem.* vol. v. p. 479—80.

* So had the antient *Heathen* for the truth of their systems. Many of the *philosophers* actually resolve all *moral* obligations into merely *human laws* and *constitutions*; making them the *only* measure of right and wrong, good and evil: so that if the people had a mind to be instructed what they should do or forbear, they sent them to the laws of their several countries, and allowed them to do whatsoever was not forbidden by those laws. *Leland*, vol. ii. 81, 82. *Plato* is for people's "worship-
"ping the gods appointed by the laws of the state, and
"in

for its support, as the *latter* has those of
England. “ *Idolatry* at *Pekin* (says a late
 “ writer) *Mohammedism* at *Constantinople*, *Po-*
 “ *pery* at *Rome*, and *orthodoxy* at *Westminster*,
 “ will be allequally right. The earth will turn
 “ round in *England*, and stand still in *Italy*;
 “ and our holy religion will be true in *Eu-*
 “ *rope*, but an arrant falsehood throughout
 “ all the continent of *Asia*.” *Humanum est*
errare, is too true respecting every man and
 all men, as fallible creatures. *Churches* and
councils, as well as other communities *, are
 therefore

“ in the manner there prescribed.” Ib. p. 119. note p.
 So before him *Pythagoras*,

Ἀθανάτους μὲν πρῶτα Θεὸς ΝΟΜΩ ὩΣ ΔΙΑΚΕΙΤΑΙ
 Σέβας.—

First the immortal gods, as is by law ordain'd,
 Worship.

When *Erasmus* was about to publish his edition of the New
 Testament, he was sorely abused, for presuming to amend
 the *text*, by correcting some blunders in the commonly-re-
 ceived readings—and, in his account of the arguments of
 his opposers, says, among others, *Quidam hic nobis tradunt*
Lesbiam regulam, ut id habeatur pro recto, quod vulgo re-
ceptum est. “ Some here lay down for me the *Lesbian*
 “ rule, that, “ that should be esteemed *right*, which is
 “ commonly received.” At this rate, how unprofitably
 does a man pass his time in endeavouring to instruct him-
 self, with the hope of instructing others ?

* “ By paying little deference to *general councils*,
 “ few inconveniences arise, compared with those which
 “ inevitably follow a blind and tame submission, in
 “ points of faith, to human decisions, and to *public*
 “ *wisdom*, as some of our controversial doctors have
 “ loved to call it, which may be *public folly*.

“ *Public wisdom* is a mere *Proteus* ; and, not to con-
 “ sider it in *Pagan* or *Mahometan* countries, amongst
 “ the *Jews* it once was the *wisdom* of *Ahab* and *Jezebel*,
 “ and

therefore liable to be mistaken, as is modestly confessed by the Church of *England* in her 21st *article*, “Of General Councils.”

“When they be gathered together (forasmuch as they be an assembly of men whereof all be not governed by the Spirit and word of God) they may *err*, and sometimes *have erred* in things pertaining to God. Wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they are taken out of the Holy Scriptures.”

The writer of the following pages would humbly hope, that, having so venerable an authority for calling in question the truth of certain matters, which are most *assuredly believed amongst us*, he shall not be deemed impertinently contentious, if, touching some points, he differs from the generality of his countrymen, who, contenting themselves with *notions* and opinions *received by tradition from their fathers*, have never thought of looking after the foundations on which they are grounded, and have therefore mistaken the *fallible* authority of men like themselves, for the divine and *infallible* authority of *truth itself*.

That our *brothels* are filled with *harlots*, our streets with *prostitutes*, and our land with

“and afterwards of *Annas* and *Caiaphas*. It sets out with a great shew of religion, it begins with the Gospel according to *St. Matthew*, and it often ends in the Gospel according to *Mr. Hobbes*.” Jortin Rem, vol. ii. p. 193—4.

impurity,

impurity, is too dreadfully true. *Magdalens, Asylums*, and all the kind and benevolent interpositions of public charities, however we may suppose them, with respect to some few individuals, to answer their benevolent designs, are inadequate to the cure of so crying an evil. A tree is not to be destroyed by plucking off a few leaves, or by cutting away here and there a branch; nor can so general an evil, as we have spoken of, be reformed by so partial, so precarious a remedy, as, from the nature of things, it is in the power of the best disposed, as matters are now constituted amongst us, to administer.

The *ax must be laid to the root*—this is the divine wisdom. The truth is, that the evil above mentioned, as all others, arises from the neglect and contempt of the divine law, and the substitution of human * laws in its stead. The wisdom and goodness of God, which He has shewn in the provision graciously made for the protection and defence of the *weaker* sex, from the villainy, treachery, and cruelty of the *stronger*, are disregarded. God's laws are laid aside, for that system of baseness and barbarity, which per-

* This *practice* exactly harmonizes with the *principles* of Lord Balingbroke, who concludes a very horrid sentiment on the *commerce* of men and women, with these words :—“ *Increase and multiply* is the law of nature. The manner in which this shall be executed, with the greatest advantage to society, is the *law* of man.” Here this matter is left wholly to political considerations and human laws, without any *divine law* to restrain or regulate it.

mits men, with impunity, first to *seduce*, and then to betray, to infamy, want, misery, disease, and even death itself in many instances, thousands and tens of thousands of unhappy women, who (were the laws of Heaven regarded, as they ought to be, and made the foundation of our *municipal* laws) instead of becoming nuisances, and reduced to the state of *Devils* * incarnate, might have been the comforts of their families, the delight of their friends, the ornaments of civil society.

As to what shall be advanced on these, and on the other subjects of the following discourse, the *author* is not wild enough to imagine that, what he has to say, will meet with any better reception than *that book* does from whence he takes his authority; or that any person who does not regard the *Bible* so far as to pay an implicit regard to its sacred

* This expression will not be thought too strong, when the appendages, and concomitant-vices of *prostitution* are considered; such as *profane cursing* and *swearing*—*blasphemy*—*obscene talking*—*drunkenness*—*lying*—*thieving*—and even the *unnatural crime* mentioned Rom. i. 26. This is so frequent, as even to have become common. When such are the gradual consequences of eradicating every principle of *modesty* and *virtue* from the *female* mind, how ought that *law* to be revered, which was ordained of Heaven for their protection! *Montesquieu*, *L'esprit des Loix*, vol. i. Liv. 16. c. 12. observes, that “there are so many evils attending the loss of virtue in a woman, the whole soul is so degraded by it, and so many other faults follow upon it, that, in a popular state, *public incontinence* may be regarded as the greatest of misfortunes.”

dictates,

dictates, will be in the least persuaded by what will be offered: much less that there will be any alteration in our *national* system of laws, 'till, as a nation, we practically adopt, as we certainly profess to believe, and as it is evidently *true*, that God is to make laws for man, and not man for God; or, in other words, that the *world* is to conform to the *Bible*, and not the *Bible* to the *world*.

It is now long since Christ charged the *Jewish Rabbies* with *making void the law of God through their traditions, and teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*, hereby proving themselves the children and followers of those of whom he complains *Is. xxix. 13. This people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precept of men.* Human nature is * just the same now that it was then, and the same leaven has run through *human systems*, more or less, to this hour.

Our laws concerning *marriage*, especially since the famous *marriage-act*, are full

* “ August 1, 1543, the *Parisian* divines assembling the people by the sound of a trumpet, published five-and-twenty heads of *Christian doctrine*, proposing the bare conclusions, and determinations, without adding reasons, persuasions, or grounds, but only prescribing, as it were by authority, *what they would have believed.* These were printed, and sent through all *France*, confirmed by the *King's* letters, under most grievous punishments against whomsoever spake or taught otherwise.” *Brent. Hist. Coun. Trent.* 105.

of this, and hence in part arises the mischief complained of. By substituting a human *ceremony of man's invention*, in the place of the *only ordinance of marriage* which God ever instituted or revealed, we have reduced the most solemn of all ties to a sort of *civil institution*, the most sacred of all obligations to a mere *civil contract*; and where the *latter* can be avoided, the *former* is as *totally vacated*, as if it had never been.

By God's express command from *Mount Sinai*, where the laws concerning *moral good and evil*, were eternally and unalterably fixed, no man could *take a virgin* and then *abandon* her. *He shall surely endow her to be his wife.* *Exod. xxii. 16.* And again, *Deut. xxii. 29. She shall be his wife; BECAUSE HE HAS HUMBLLED HER, he may not put her away all his days.*

Will any say—"these laws are * antiquated?" I answer, "they are as unchangeable as the God that made them." His *law* is His *will*, and therefore can no more *change* than Himself. *The strength of ISRAEL is not a man that He should repent* נחם *change his mind, opinion, or purpose.* *1 Sam. xv. 29. I am JEHOVAH, I change not,* is the character

* We read in the memoirs of the great *Scriblerus*, that one of the *philosophical works* of that *profound genius* was intitled, "A complete digest of the *laws of Nature*, with a review of those that are *obsolete* or *repealed*, and of those that are ready to be *renewed* and *put in force.*"

which

which he records of himself, Mal. iii. 16; and to shew that he hath stamped the same *unchangeableness* upon his *laws*, he says, Deut. iv. 2. *Ye shall not ADD unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye DIMINISH ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your GOD.* And again, Deut. xii. 32. *What thing soever I command you, observe to do it, thou shalt not ADD thereto nor DIMINISH from it.*

Now, I do take it for granted, that He, who, speaking to the people of *Israel*, calls himself THE LORD YOUR GOD, is also THE LORD OUR GOD. *Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes—of the Gentiles also.* Rom. iii. 29. For which very evident reason, I do conclude, that both *Jews* and *Gentiles* are equally subject to those laws which the LORD THEIR GOD once revealed and established for the *moral* government of the world: and therefore (as we may learn from the testimony of the *Apostle* of the *Gentiles* under the New Testament, Gal. iii. 10. as well as from *Moses* under the Old Testament, Deut. xxvii. 26.) *Cursed is every one, that continueth not in ALL things which are written in the BOOK OF THE LAW, to do them.*

These laws therefore stand on the same footing with what we usually call the *Ten Commandments*—and are no more subject to *decay* or *alteration* than *they* are. I say they stand on the same footing, because they were equally delivered by GOD to *Moses*, on the
same

same divine *veracity*, the same awful, and indisputable *authority*, and are guarded by the same tremendous *sanction*.

That the merely *ceremonial* laws are *waxed old*, and *vanished away*, Heb. viii. 13. is certain, because they were only established for the *time then present*, Heb. ix. 9. to point out, and prefigure *things to come*. They had their end and accomplishment in CHRIST, and of course their utter abolition. This, so far from arguing any *change* of mind or will in GOD, is one of the highest and most illustrious proofs of the uniformity, and consistency, with which he has laid down, carried on, and perfected the same one design from the beginning.

But the *moral* laws which respect the well-being of society, the prevention of disorder, confusion, and all other appendages of *moral evil*, must endure, as long as the objects to which they relate endure on the face of the earth. When *St. Paul*, Gal. iii. 10. and Rom. x. 5. cites the sanctions of the *moral* law from the Old Testament, he shews very clearly, that it still remains as an invariable rule of conduct, from which all the people of GOD, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, are equally forbidden to depart.

Can any person therefore, in his sober senses, imagine that it was *unlawful* in the sight of GOD (because expressly by a *positive* law forbidden) *three thousand* years ago, to take a virgin and then abandon her, but that now it is *lawful*? or, because there is no law of
this

this land against it, it is therefore less offensive in the eyes of God, than at the instant He forbid it? or that God's law is only binding on the consciences of men, where it has the sanction of human * institutions to enforce it? If it be *time* which wears out the malignity of such an evil, or the obligation of the divine law against it, we may as well imagine that other crimes stand in the same predicament, and the most atrocious violations of the security and happiness of mankind, will have a *prescriptive* innocence to plead in their excuse.

That all such reasonings are not only without foundation, but directly opposite to the *divine truth*, we learn from that *truth itself*, which hath assured us, that “*it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.*” And that we may be assured He stamped the most permanent authority on that law, and particularly on that part of the law of which we have now been speaking, He adds, in the very next words—“*Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery; and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery.*” This is no *new* law enacted by our blessed *Saviour* on the subject,

* We may say of human laws, ceremonies, and institutions, which interfere with the obligation of God's ordinances or commandments, as *Henry II. King of France* said of the *papal* dispensations, that—“they are
“ not able to secure the conscience, and are nothing
“ but a shadow cast before the eyes of men, which cannot
“ hide the truth from God.”

but an application and explanation of that very law which he had, immediately before, said,—“ could never fail,” and which was given to *Moses* at mount *Sinai*. See *Luke* xvi. 17, 18.

When our Lord in his sermon on the mount, as recorded by *St. Matthew*, is about to explain the *moral* law, and vindicate it from the false glosses which the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* had put upon it, he prefaces his explanation with these remarkable words—
 “ *Verily I say unto you, 'till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle (one, even the most seemingly inconsiderable part of a single letter) shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*” *ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται. Until all things be done.* Which, with the learned *Dr. Hammond* on *Matth.* v. 18, I would thus paraphrase: “ ‘Till the world be destroyed, and
 “ all things come to an end, no one least
 “ particle shall depart from the law, or
 “ be taken away, or lose its force and ob-
 “ ligation.” “ *Whosoever, therefore, faith Christ, ver. 19, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do, and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*”
 After such a testimony as this to the * immu-

* The Psalmist faith, *Pf.* cxix. 89.

| | | | | |
|----------|------------|----------|------------|----------------|
| לעולם | יהוה | דברך | נצב | בשמים |
| For ever | O Jehovah! | thy word | is settled | in the heavens |

I must therefore declare it, not only as my *opinion*, but as a fixed article of my *faith*, that a single *atom* of the *moral law* can never be changed—nor will God alter the thing that is gone out of his lips. *Pf.* lxxxix. 34.

tability

tability of the divine law, it would hardly be decent in me to attempt an addition to its force, by any further arguments.

I will therefore now proceed to examine the subjects proposed, which I shall do singly on the authority of God's word; and this, not by detaching one text here and there from the rest of the sacred scriptures; but by examining carefully the *whole* throughout, *comparing spiritual things with spiritual*, 1 Cor. ii. 13. and thus allowing the word of God to be, what God doubtless intended it should be, the *best comment* upon *itself*.

Nor shall I venture to rest any one point on the authority of even the best * *translations*, but constantly have recourse to the *original scriptures*, being desirous to follow that sensible maxim, that “ nothing should
“ be received in proof, but on the best tes-
“ timony which the nature of the thing will
“ admit of.” If, in matters of *civil* property, “ a copy will not be admitted in
“ evidence, where the original can be come
“ at,” how much doth it behove us, in matters of *eternal concern*, to have the best evidence for our determinations? *Satius est petere fontes quam sectari rivulos.*

I have endeavoured to clear my imagination of all *worldly* systems, and *human inventions*

* Whosoever reads the strictures *on*, or rather *against*, the sacred scriptures, of that ignorant and malicious reviler of them, *M. de Voltaire*, may see how he has been led into his mistakes by some of the *Latin* and *French* translations.

whatsoever, whether *Popish* or *Protestant*, and to allow no authority more modern than the sacred scripture, *less* weighty than inspiration itself, to amount to a proof of what is *true* or *false*. As for the writings of primitive * *fathers*, *Christians*, &c. the whole rabble of *schoolmen*, together with the decrees of *councils*, *churches*, *synods*, &c. a man, who wishes to know the *truth*, should no more receive a matter of *doctrine* on their authority, than he should a matter of *fact* on the testimony of a *Popish* legend. Nay, I will

* These were but *fallible men*, like ourselves, at best; and if we consider the strange opinions which are to be found in their writings, we must acknowledge them to be very faulty. Though they have been so mutilated, changed, interpolated, and corrupted, by the various *sects* who have wanted their testimony to speak for them, that it is difficult to know what is *genuine*, and what is not. I remember to have met with the following dismal, though short account, of the writings of the *fathers*,—"Scatent erroribus tum veterum tum recentiorum *hæreticorum*." "They abound with the errors, as well of the old, as of the more modern *hæretics*." BURNET observes, that "there was a great mixture of *sophisticated stuff*, that went under the *antient names*, and was joined to their *true works*, which critics have since discovered to be *spurious*." Hist. Ref. p. 30. 2d edit. vol. i. The *apostle*, Tit. i. 14. warns us against *Jewish fables*; we should be equally careful of giving heed to those which seem to bear a *Christian* stamp.

We might as well recommend a *young man* to the study of so many volumes of *news-papers* to make him an accurate *historiographer*, as to the study of the *fathers* to make him a *sound divine*. How far they may make him a *rotten* one, may be seen in the *Life of Dr. Clarke*, by *W. Whiston*, p. 143, 151, 155.

go farther and say, that the * dying words, and unshaken constancy of *saints, martyrs, and confessors*, ought to prove no more than that “ they themselves believed what they said,” unless the *holy scriptures* bear testimony to their opinions.

However clear the *spring* is, yet, when it divides itself, flowing from the fountain-head into different channels, it will naturally present to the *eye* the *colour*, and to the *palate* the *taste*, of the different soils through which it may happen to take its course. I have therefore found little encouragement to rest any thing on the authority of *commentators*; who, being prejudiced by education, influenced by custom, and misled by others that have gone before them—instead of *thinking* as the *Bible speaks*, too frequently make the *Bible* speak as *they think*. The conclusion of the matter therefore ought to be—*To the LAW and to the TESTIMONY!* Is. viii. 20.

* Much has been built on the constancy with which the *martyrs* suffered—but when we find people dying with equal constancy for opposite opinions, nothing is conclusively proved on either side, but that each believed his own tenets.—See Burnet’s Hist. Ref. vol. ii. p. 112. 3d edit. the case of *Joan of Kent*, and of *George Van Pare*, a *Dutchman*.

It is a dangerous thing to build our faith on *equivocal* testimony, instead of the ONE INFALLIBLE EVIDENCE of GOD’S WRITTEN WORD—which can neither *lye* nor *deceive*; and against which there can lie no appeal, to any *other writings* in the world, nor to any *other testimony* of any kind whatsoever.

C H A P. I.

Of MARRIAGE as a Divine Institution.

WHEN the great and all-wise Creator had formed man upon the earth, *male and female*, He *blessed them, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth.* Gen. i. 28. This command was to be fulfilled in a way of God's own appointment; that is to say, by *the union of the man and woman in personal knowledge of each other.* This is the only † *marriage-ordinance* which we find revealed in the sacred scriptures. Wherever this *union* should come to pass, though *two* distinct and independent persons before, they now were to become as *one.* *They shall be one * flesh,* Gen. ii. 24. and so

† By this expression, I would be understood to mean, *that by which* the parties become *one flesh* in God's sight, so as *not to be put asunder.* See Matth. xix. 5, 6.

* לִבְשָׁר אֶחָד—*as one flesh*—ἐἰς σὰρκα μίαν, Gr. Test. The Hebrew ל prefixed, hath often this sense. See Josh. vii. 5. Lam. i. 17. So the Greek preposition ἐἰς, which answers to it. Compare 2 Sam. vii. 14. with Heb. i. 5. where the לבן and לאב of the Old Testament, are rendered by ἐἰς πατέρα and ἐἰς υἱόν in the New Testament; and clearly evince the names of *Father and Son* to be *æconomical* names of *office* in the covenant of redemption, not descriptive of an inferiority and subordination in the persons of the GODHEAD. Compare Luke i. 35.

Also היה with ל, and a noun following, denotes some change of condition, state, or quality, and signifies—to *become.* Gen. ii. 7. 24. xvii. 4. Exod. iv. 4. & al. freq.

indissolubly

indissolubly one, as to be inseparable. *What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.* Matt. xix. 6.

That this *oneness* arose from this *act* of union, and from the command consequent upon it, that *they should be one flesh*, is evident from the *Apostle's* reasoning, 1 Cor. vi. 15, 16. *Know ye not that your bodies are the members of CHRIST? Shall I then take the members of CHRIST, and make them the members of an * harlot? God forbid! What, know ye not that he that is JOINED to an harlot is ONE BODY? for two, saith he, shall be ONE FLESH.*

This question of the *Apostle's*—*Know ye not that he that is joined to an harlot is one body?* and what follows, being taken together, have a plain reference to what *Adam* said, Gen. ii. 24. and seems very fully to determine, not only the strictness of the marriage-union, but *that* which constitutes it in the sight of GOD. In all which there is not the least hint, or most distant allusion, to any *outward* rite or ceremony administered by any person whatsoever; but the whole is made to rest simply and only in the

* πορνῇ, from πέρνημι, or πέρνω, to sell. A *whore*, a woman who prostitutes her body for gain. So the Latin *meretrix* is from mereor, to earn, get money: and our *English* word *whore*, from the German *buren* (Dutch *bueren*) to hire. Thus *Ovid*. lib. i. eleg. 10.

Stat meretrix certo cuivis mercabilis ære,
Et miseras jussu corpore quærit opes.

See *Parkhurst's* Gr. Lex.

personal † union of the *man* and *woman*. It is this *alone* which, according to the *Apostle*, makes them *one flesh*.

If

† It may be presumed, that in what *Adam* said, Gen. ii. 23. he had an immediate reference to her formation out of a *part of himself*; but that there was also an allusion to the *personal union* of the *male and female*, in what he says, ver. 24. is clearly proved by the *Apostle's* argument, 1 Cor. vi. 16; otherwise his citing this passage of Gen. ii. 24. would have been nothing to the purpose to shew that *this* makes them *one flesh*. The Hebrew בשר בשר is rendered by the LXX, ΠΡΟΣΚΟΛΛΗΘΗΣΕΤΑΙ, προς την γυναικα αὐτῆς, in Matt. xix. 5. ΠΡΟΣΚΟΛΛΗΘΗΣΕΤΑΙ τη γυναικι αὐτῆς. Let the reader compare all this with the *Apostle's* ὁ ΚΟΛΛΩΜΕΝΟΣ τῇ πόρῃ, and it will be very easy to see that the same *idea* runs through the whole; which is, that those who are *thus joined*, are *one body*, and pronounced by GOD—*one flesh*. This will appear still the more evidently, if we consider OUR LORD's expression, as represented by the *Evangelist*, Matt. xix. 6. where he uses the word ΣΥΝΕΖΕΥΞΕΝ, *hath joined*, or *yoked together*, as the *effect* of the *cause* expressed by Προσκοληθήσεσθαι. All this will appear still more evidently, if, with the accurate *Ar. Mont.* we translate בשר בשר, & adhærebit IN UXORE SUA.

A very candid critic on *Thelyphthora*, asks, “how the “above idea (of κολλώμενος) is reconcileable with the “context, in which the same word is applied to the Lord “—ὁ κολλώμενος τῷ κυρίῳ, *He that is JOINED to the Lord,*” &c.? It is a pleasure to me to give a candid question as candid an answer.

The *idea* contended for, where κολλώμενος is made use of as denoting the union of a *man* with an *harlot*, cannot be the same with that where it denotes the union of the believer in *one spirit* with the Lord: the *one* is evidently a *car-nal* idea, the other as evidently *spiritual*; yet the *marriage-union* is emblematical of the *spiritual* union between CHRIST and the believer, as to the strictness and indissolubility of the union itself, and many other particulars, which the reader may find, Eph. v. 22—33. where (v. 31.) the *Apostle* quotes Gen. ii. 24. and expressly assimilates it to the union of CHRIST with the church, v. 32. Thus
are

If the licentious and temporary union with an *harlot*, makes a man to become *one body*, and *one flesh* with her, we may suppose that the sin of *fornication* receives no small share of its malignity, from the abuse thereby committed of the *ordinance* of *marriage* as established by God : as entering into it without any intention of abiding by it, but merely to gratify a transient lust, and that with a woman who departs from one to another, as gain or evil desire may lead her. Nevertheless the *Apostle*, on the authority of Gen. ii. 24. says, that *he that is JOINED to an harlot, is one body, and one flesh* with her, by being engaged in *that ordinance*, of which these things are declared, in the passage referred to, to be the inevitable consequences.

From what has been said, it appears, that *marriage*, as instituted of God, simply consists (as to the essence of it) in the *union* of the *man* and *woman* as *one body*; for which

are *earthly* things made use of to teach us *heavenly* truths ; and indeed in this dark and imperfect state of *mortality*, this is the *only* way by which we can become acquainted with them ; they are therefore made use of for this gracious purpose, throughout the whole *Bible*.

The *Apostle* is shewing, in this place of 1 Cor. vi. the horrid inconsistency of *believers*, who, in a *spiritual* sense, are *joined to the Lord*, (compare John xv. 5.) and become *one spirit* with him, (so that their very bodies are *temples of the Holy Ghost*, ver. 19.) taking those *bodies* from the *sanctified* use (see 1 Thess. iv. 4, 5.) to which they ought to be dedicated, and *joining* them in carnal commerce with an *harlot*, by which they become *one body*, and of course *one flesh*, with her.—This is not glorifying God in *their bodies*, and in *their spirit*, &c. ver. 20. but a profanation and defilement of *both*.

plain and evident reason, no outward forms or ceremonies of man's invention, can add to or diminish from the effects of *this union* in the sight of God. What ends these things may serve, as to civil purposes, I shall not dispute : but I cannot suppose that the * *matrimonial-*

* Our marriage-ceremony, or form of *solemnization* of *matrimony*, was settled by *Archbishop Cranmer*, and twelve others, in the reign of Ed. VI. *i. e.* about 232 years ago, or 1548 years after the canon of scripture was closed, and is certainly the method by which the *civil contract* is established among us, provided it be administered agreeably to a subsequent act of *parliament* (26 G. II. c. 33.) ; but how far must the mind be gone in superstition and prejudice, to suppose, that a human ceremony can controul or alter the fixed and determinate *laws of Heaven*, or have the least influence on what *does* or *does not* make the parties *one flesh* in God's sight ! Grot. de Jur. lib. ii. c. 5. § 8. saith—*Conjugium naturaliter esse existimamus talem cohabitationem maris cum femina, quæ feminam constituat quasi sub oculis & custodia maris. Nam tale consortium & in mutis animantibus quibusdam videre est. In homine vero, qua animans est utens ratione, ad hoc accessit fides, qua se femina mari obstringit. Nec aliud, ut conjugium subsistat, natura videtur requirere.*

We account marriage to be naturally such a cohabitation of the *male* with the *female*, as may place the female, as it were, under the eye and custody of the *male* ; for such a fellowship [or intercourse] is to be seen among certain brute animals. But as to man, as he is an animal having the use of reason, to this (natural conjunction) has acceded a solemn contract, by which the female binds herself to the male. Nor does nature seem to require any thing else for the subsistence of marriage.

Gronovius notes on part of the above passage, as follows, viz.

Custodia maris.] Videtur addendum, procreationis, & mutui auxilii causa.

trimonial-service in our church, or any other, can make the parties more *one flesh* in the sight of God, supposing them to have been *united*, than the *burial*-service can make the corpse over which it is red more dead than it was before.

Supposing they have not been *united*, they are not *one flesh* in the sight of God, by any virtue in the words of the service, any more than a piece of *wafer* becomes *flesh and blood* by a Popish priest's consecration. It is not *man*, but God, which makes the *twain one flesh*; neither is it *man's ordinance*, but God's *institution*, which brings that to pass. If this be not so, why, notwithstanding the words of the service, does incapacity, inability, or impotency, in either party, render all that has been done *null* and *void*? See Burn, Eccl. Law, vol. ii. p. 39.

By observing the *outward* ordinance, the intention of the parties is publickly recognized, and they are pronounced *man* and *wife* in the sight of the world; but they are not so in God's sight, unless by anticipation, as it were, with respect to the mutual promises made to each other, which the sacred scriptures call *betrothing* or *espousing*; but the

The custody of the male.] It seems there should be added—for the sake of procreation, and of mutual help.

Accessit fides.] Tacite significat fidem quam dat maritus uxori non esse a natura, sed ab instituto.

Acceded a solemn contract.] Here is tacitly signified, that the faith which the *husband* pledges to the *wife*, is not from nature, but by (positive) institution.

contract is then, and only then, *complete* in the sight of God, when the only ordinance which He has appointed has passed between them; and therefore it is very properly styled —*the consummation*.

As to the person celebrating the marriage —the place where—the manner how; it is very certain, that these things are wholly of human invention, and therefore not only various in different parts of the world, but also in the same country. We have amongst us *Jews, Papists, Quakers*; all these observe an outward form or ceremony different from each other. As for the church of *England*, we have differed from ourselves; for the same ceremony which would have constituted a *legal* marriage before the 26th of the late King George II. will not do it now, unless certain circumstances, introduced and insisted upon by act of parliament, be observed.

But the *all-wise Legislator of the universe* hath not left His divine institutions on so vague, so precarious, so uncertain a footing. *But see*, said He to *Moses*, *that thou make all things according to the pattern shewn thee in the mount*. Heb. viii. 5. We find every particular, down to the very pins in the tabernacle, every *rite* and *ceremony*, even to the minutest circumstance, exactly delineated and revealed. But we find no *marriage-service*, or *religious ceremony of an* * *outward* kind, so much

* As for the manner of celebrating marriage, *Moses* has left no direction about it. We do not find it accompanied

much as mentioned. The business of *marriage*, by which I understand, the parties *actually* becoming *one flesh* in God's sight, was left as at first ordained, to the one simple *act* of union. A conclusive proof this, that nothing else is of *divine* institution; consequently, that nothing else is essential to constitute a marriage in the sight of God, but that *this* is.

Should the *Reader* retain the least doubt of the truth of what has been said, or be under any difficulty in understanding what is meant by those words—*They shall be one flesh*, we may refer to a very clear explanation of the matter, not only by reviewing St. *Paul's* words, 1 Cor. vi. 15, 16. but also by considering more minutely what is meant by those passages mentioned before, from the law of *Moses*; but as the *texts* are not cited at length, I will here set them down as they stand in the places referred to.

Exod. xxii. 16, 17.

If a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her, he shall surely endow her to be his wife. If her father utterly refuse to give her unto him, he shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins.

By this passage, as from many others in the sacred scriptures, it appears, that fathers, during the minority of their daughters, as in every other instance (see Numb. xxx. 3, 4, 5.) so in the business of contracting marriage, accompanied with any religious ceremony, such as going to the Tabernacle or Temple, offering sacrifices, or even that it was performed by or before a *priest*. See Ant. Univ. Hist. vol. iii. p. 145.

had

had a negative in their own power : therefore *if a woman being in her father's house in her youth*, i. e. being under age, as we term it, *betrothed or espoused herself to a man*, the former by * *verba de futuro*, the latter by *verba de præsenti*, as the civilians speak ; both which were held so sacred, that *defiling* either a *betrothed or espoused* woman was a species of *adultery*, and to be punished with death : —yet if the father withheld his consent, neither the *betrothing* nor *espousals*, nor any contract arising from them, could lawfully be carried into execution. But in the passage before us, matters were gone too far to be recalled. The man had not only *enticed the maid*, but had actually *lain with* her ; and therefore GOD commands that *he shall SURELY* endow her *לָאִשְׁתּוֹ לְךָ sibi in uxorem*. Mont. *for his wife*. For now the primary institution took place, *they shall be one flesh* ; and what GOD *had joined together* (by pronouncing them *one flesh*) man could not *put asunder*. Therefore the 17th verse doth not say—“ If the father utterly refuse to give her unto him, such marriage shall be null and void ; but—

* Spousals *de futuro* are, according to our ecclesiastical law, a mutual promise, or covenant of marriage, to be had afterwards ; as when the man saith to the woman—“ I will take thee to my wife ;” and she then answereth, “ I will take thee to my husband.”—Espousals *de præsenti* are a mutual promise or contract of present matrimony ; as when the man doth say to the woman—“ I do take thee to my wife,”—and she then answereth—“ I do take thee to my husband.” 2 Burn 16.

if—

if—or—* though the father utterly refuse to give her unto him, he shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins. Which is but explanatory of what goes before, he shall SURELY endow her to be his wife, by paying *מִהָר* the dower, into the hands of the father after becoming one flesh with her, as he ought to have done, and was usually done, before-hand. *מִהָר* is supposed to be a dowry or portion which the husband paid into the hands of the bride, or her father, as a kind of purchase of her person. This is, to this day, the practice of several † eastern nations; and this was not to

* So *וְאִם* is often rendered, as in *Judg.* xiii. 16. *Pf.* xxvii. 3. *Isa.* x. 22. *Jer.* xv. 1. *Lam.* iii. 32. & al. freq.; and so I think it ought to be understood here, (however I may differ from the *Talmudists*) in order to make this verse consistent with the preceding, where it is said—*וְאִם מִהָר, יִמְהַרְנָה* endowing he shall endow her, &c. as well as to avoid the very great difficulty of supposing that such an action as *enticing the maid, lying with her, and then leaving her* on the father's refusal, was of no higher consequence than paying a small sum of money; for the *כֶּסֶף*, or silver paid, amounted to very little, and rather seems to be payable as an acknowledgment of the contract, than any thing else. See *Nold. Heb. Part.* *וְאִם*, No. 13. translated by *quamvis—although*:—where the reader will find many authorities.

† See *Parkhurst's Heb. Lex.* sub voc. *מִהָר*.

Tacitus L. de Mor. Germ. mentions such a custom among the Germans. *Dotem non uxor marito, sed uxori maritus offert, intersunt parentes & propinqui, ac munera probant: In hæc munera uxor accipitur, hoc maximum vinculum, hæc arcana sacra, hoc conjugales Deos arbitrantur.* “ The wife doth not bring a dower
“ to the husband, but the husband to the wife; the pa-
“ rents and relations are present, and approve the gifts.
“ On these gifts the wife is accepted; this is the chiefest
“ bond: these are sacred mysteries, with which they
“ think.

to be withheld because the husband had married the woman either *without* or *against* the father's consent. In short, the man was not to take advantage of his own wrong. But, **ON** * *whether* the father refused or *not*, the dowry must be paid according to law, and thus the contract be publicly ratified.

Having seen what was to be done where a man *enticed a maid*, and took actual possession of her, *against* the father's *consent*; let us next see what was to be done when a man took a maid, without even the father's *knowledge*; not by a seduction or enticement, but on a sudden and unexpected interview, by meeting her without any previous intent.

Deut. xxii. 28, 29.

*If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold † on her
and*

“think the Gods are married.” This was called among the *Romans*—*coemptio nuptialis*, and was reciprocal, as well on the woman's side as on the man's. To this *Virg. Georg. I. l. 31.* seems to allude :

Teque sibi generum *Tethys* emat omnibus undis.

* This is also one sense of the Hebrew particle **ON** *an—utrùm—whether or not*—of which *Noldius* gives many examples. See *Nold.* p. 65. No. 2. edit. 1734. It is to be remarked, that *Noldius* has not mentioned *Exod. xxii. 17.* as an example of any of the senses here given, viz. either as *si—quamvis—*or *utrùm*.

† The word **התפש** seems here to be rightly rendered by *lay hold on her*—*Prendra Fr.—take her.*—The *Jewish* doctors construe this into that sort of *violence* and *constraint*, which we call a *rape*. But this is spoken of at ver. 25, where the word **קח** is used; which is a much stronger expression than **התפש** *to take*, or *lay hold on*; and so our translators have (ver. 25.) observed, in their
3 translating

and lie with her, and they be found; the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; BECAUSE HE HATH HUMBLLED HER, he may not put her away all his days.

The word *shekels* is not in the original, but inserted by our translators; in the passage of Exod. xxii. 17. there is the same word כסף *silver*, or *silver-money*; there it is said in general, according to the dowry of virgins. Here it is said כסף חמשים *Quinquaginta argenteos, fifty pieces of silver-money*. By comparing the two passages, we may therefore look upon this as the assessment of

translating ורדחוק by—*force her*. That this is the true idea of the word, may be seen by comparing 2 Sam. xiii. 11, 14. when *Amnon* commits a *rape* on *Tamar*. The word תפש does not necessarily signify violence, which חזק does. *Omnis significatio est vehementia, fortitudo. Calasio*, sub voc. This place of Deut. xxii. 28. is rather to be understood of “defiling a maid, that being “occasionally *laid bold on*, did presently yield, not being solicited before-hand, and drawn to it by degrees. But Exod. xxii. 16. speaks of such as did “entice a maid, with promise of marriage, and then defiled her.” *Clark*. The two passages taken together shew, that in neither case shall the man *abandon* the virgin he hath taken. We must conclude there is a reason for using different words at ver. 25, and ver. 28, in the *Hebrew* text, though the *LXX.* translate them both by βιάσασθαι—probably תפש is a more general word than חזק, and signifies *laying bold on*, or *apprehending*, whether by *violence* or otherwise. Among the *Athenians*, if a man had *ravished* a young woman (so she were free-born) he was fined 1000 *drachmæ*, and, besides that, was obliged to *marry* her, unless it could be made appear, she had taken something of him in consideration. *Rous's Archæol. Atticæ*, 190.

the

the usual *dowry of virgins* paid to the father. It was to be paid in *this* case as well as the *former*, for in *both* the father's consent was precluded; but in no case was he to be defrauded of the *מנה* or *dowry*. This was as much to be paid when his daughter was taken *against* his consent, as when *with* it, and so when taken *without* his knowledge and consent, as in this latter case. But on whatever account the money was to be paid, it alters not the point in question, for, saith GOD, *She shall be his wife, or woman*—Fr. *Elle lui sera pour femme*—BECAUSE HE HATH HUMBLLED HER, *he may not put her away all his days*. This is clearly explanatory of the original institution—*they shall be one flesh*, and what God hath joined together (by pronouncing them *one flesh*) let not man (either the parties themselves, or any human power whatsoever) *put asunder*.

I should rather chuse to let the scripture answer for itself, than appeal to human authority for its explanation. I will only here just observe, that I am by no means singular in my views of these things. Our *ecclesiastical* courts have proceeded on this principle, have called this *personal intercourse*, previous to any *outward* ceremony, a *marriage de facto*, and have compelled the parties to a public recognition of it *in facie ecclesiæ*, in the *face of the church*. See *Blackstone's Comment.* vol. i. 435, 439:—and in *Burn's Ecc. Law*, Tit. *Marriage*, there is this remarkable passage, “ Nor was he or she to be dis-

“ missed or absolved, if those spousals *de futuro*, by reason of *carnal knowledge*, or some other *act* equivalent, did become *matrimony*.” By this it does appear, that, in the judgment of our *canon law*, if a man had promised a woman to marry her at a *future time*, and in the mean time *lay with her*, or used the *freedoms of an husband* with her, such promise did, by such acts, become *matrimony*.

So sacred have our *canonists* esteemed this *act*, that where one of the parties have forsaken the other, and married another than the person to whom they have been *thus* joined, the *ecclesiastical courts* have pronounced sentence of divorce, with regard to the *second* marriage, *causâ precontractûs*, by reason of *precontract*. With what authority will appear by-and-by.

In Bacon's Abr. vol. iii. p. 574, we find the following case:—A. contracts himself with B. and after marries C. B. sues A. on this contract in the spiritual court. There sentence is given that A. shall *marry* and *cohabit* with B. which he does accordingly. They are *baron* and *feme*, without any * divorce between A. and C; for the *marriage* of A. and C. was a mere *nullity* †.

That

* In the time of H.VIII. an act was passed, that marriages solemnized and consummated should stand good, notwithstanding any *precontract* that had not been consummated. But this was done only to gratify the *King*, and therefore in the next reign (2 Ed. VI.) this act was repealed.

† The law since 26 Geo. II. c. 33. is quite the reverse, the *precontract* between A. and B. would be a *nullity*,

That I am not singular in my opinion, respecting the one divine ordinance of *marriage*, will also appear from the remarkable statute of Henry III; which, as it is very short, I will transcribe.

“ To the king’s writ of bastardy, whether
 “ one born *before* matrimony may inherit in
 “ like manner as he that is born *after* ma-
 “ trimony: all the *bishops* answered, that
 “ they would not nor could not answer to it,
 “ because it was against the common order
 “ of the church. And *all* the *bishops* in-
 “ stanted the *lords*, that they would con-
 “ sent, that all such as were born * *before*
 “ matrimony,

nullity, and the *marriage* between A. and C. *valid*. Such are the liberties which mortals have presumed to take with the *ordinance of Heaven*. But this cannot alter either the *thing itself*, or GOD’s views of it.

* “ *Constantine*, to discourage *concubinage*, and to
 “ encourage *matrimony* in persons who lived together in
 “ that way, ordered, that if a man married his *concubine*,
 “ the children which he had by her *before marriage*,
 “ should become legitimate. But the *church* meddled
 “ not with these distinctions of the civil laws, but re-
 “ garding only the law of nature, approved *every con-*
 “ *junction* of one man with a woman, if it was with one
 “ woman and perpetual; and the more so, because the
 “ holy scriptures employ the name of *wife* or of *concu-*
 “ *bine* indifferently.

“ The first council of *Toledo*, A. D. 400, hath this
 “ canon, He who with a *believing wife* hath a *concubine*,
 “ is excommunicated: but if his *concubine* is in the stead
 “ of a *wife*, and he adheres to her alone, whether she
 “ be called *wife* or *concubine*, he is not to be rejected
 “ from communion.” See Jortin Rem. vol. ii. p. 294,
 295; who adds—“ This canon shews that there were
 “ *concubines* approved by the church.”

I would here add, that *Austin*, *De fide & oper.* c. 19.
 says—“ If a *concubine* should profess to know no other
 “ man,

“ matrimony, as to the succession of inheritance, should be legitimate, as well as they that be born *within* matrimony, for so much as the *church* accepteth SUCH TO BE LEGITIMATE. And all the *earls* and *barons* answered with one voice—that they would not change the laws of the realm, which hitherto have been used and approved.”

Here was a strong push made, that the ordinance of God should be in some measure recognized, as to its scriptural import and validity, in our municipal laws; but human wisdom forbad it !

In antient *Rome*, there were three kinds of marriage, distinguished from each other by the names of *confarreation*, *coëmnption*, and *use*.—the last of these came very near to the simplicity of the divine institution. It was,

“ man, although she should be dismissed from him to whom she is subjected, it may well be doubted whether she ought not to be admitted to receive baptism.” So that it appears very plainly, there was a time, when the conjunction of the man and woman did not depend, for its validity and lawfulness, upon human ceremonies and inventions.

In how many matters, as well as in many of the above circumstances, hath the *church* (as it is called) changed it's notions of things ! I have often thought, that if *Methuselah* had begun his long life with the æra of the *Christian church*, and had lived his 969 years in the *Christian world*, his life must have been a very miserable one, unless, like the *vicar of Bray*, of famous *versatile* memory, he could have changed with the times, and have held at least as many different opinions as he was years old.

when the accidental living together of a man and woman had been productive of children, and they found it necessary or convenient to continue together ; when, if they agreed on the matter between themselves, it became a valid marriage, and the children were considered as legitimate.

By the first law of the 12th table, relative to *marriages*, it is declared, that “ when a
“ woman shall have cohabited with a man for
“ a whole year, without having been three
“ nights absent from him, she shall be
“ deemed *his wife*.” By which it appears that the *Romans* considered living together, or *conjugal* cohabitation, as the very essence of matrimony. *Broughton Hist. Lib. tit. Marriage*. This may be reckoned one instance, in which, to the disgrace of *us Christians, the Gentiles, which had not the law, did, by nature, the things contained in the law*. Rom. ii. 14.

According to the laws of *Scotland*, cohabitation with a woman for some time, and openly acknowledging of her as a wife, confirms the marriage, and renders it valid in law. *Mem. of Cranstoun*, p. 30. So where a man and woman have lived together 'till they have children, if the man marry the woman, even upon his death-bed, all the antinuptial children become legitimated, and inherit the honours and estate of their father.

The case is the same in *Holland*; with this difference only, that all the children to be legitimated, must appear with the father and mother in the church, at the ceremony of
their

their marriage. See the *History of Women*, by *W. Alexander*, M. D. vol. ii. p. 252, 267.

Our system in *England* is very injurious and cruel, as it destroys one grand inducement to matrimony, where a man and woman have lived together and had children, by stamping bastardy on the issue without remedy. Whence so inhuman a plan should be derived into the common law of the realm, cannot well be devised; but it must be supposed to have commenced in some of the darkest ages of ignorance and barbarism; for at the latter end of the twelfth century, *Pope Alexander III.* made a constitution, that “children born
“ before the solemnization of matrimony,
“ where matrimony followed, should, to all
“ intents and purposes, be as legitimate as
“ those born after matrimony.” By which it should seem that the institution of *Constantine* had been totally laid aside; also, that the *church* thought very differently of marriage, from what it did in the fourth century. See before, p. 31, note.

Upon the whole, it may be concluded, that such laws as are above mentioned, would never have been thought of, unless the proposers and framers of such schemes of *post-legitimation*, had been convinced, that the *conjugal cohabitation* of the man and woman was a lawful marriage in God’s account, consequently the issue legitimate in His sight: therefore they were willing to reconcile matters as well as they could, between *human invention* and *divine institution*.

Having, I trust, established this truth, that where a man and a virgin are united by the *communication of their persons* to each other, they become *one flesh* in the sight of God, so made by his express command, inasmuch that the man *may not put her away all his days*; it follows, that they are *indissolubly* united, beyond the power of *disunion* by any human authority whatsoever.

It is the contempt of this law, this primary law of nature, or rather of the God of nature, established from *the beginning*, and afterwards enforced and explained by the positive laws above-mentioned, which lies at the root of the evils complained of. For, *if a man* כִּי אִישׁ which is the scripture's way of saying *any man, every man*, without distinction (for God makes none in the texts we have been considering, nor in any other) was deemed the *husband* of the *virgin he lay with*, and was obliged to make a public recognition of it, as enjoined by God so to do, without any liberty to *put her away all his days*; if the law of the land was as positive as to this, as the law delivered from God to *Moses* above-cited, we should see a wonderful change in the manners of the people, as well as a stop put to the daily ruin of innocent girls. Would the *great and opulent* debauch their tenant's or labourer's daughters, or their own servant-maids, if they knew that this put it into the power of such poor creatures to claim their *seducers* as their *husbands*? Certainly not, at least not in one instance of ten thousand where it

it now happens. Must we not suppose, that the great and merciful Creator enacted His laws for the protection of the * *weaker* sex against the *stronger*, as well as for the prevention of *confusion and every evil work*, which must ensue from men and women's coming together and parting ὡς ἄλογα ζῶα Φυσικά (as the *Apostle* says) *like natural brute beasts which are without reason*? As therefore a contempt of the laws of Heaven, is evidently the cause of the evil, it is as evident that nothing but restoring their due *respect and efficacy* can ever cure it.

How great an impediment to matrimony doth this also prove, among the profligate and licentious part of mankind? (which, as the world goes, I do not suppose to constitute a very small part of it)—for if men can gratify their passions, and indulge their love of variety, without the least danger of much further trouble than it costs them to seduce a poor unwary girl, they will hardly bind them-

* The *Atheist* and *Hobbiſt* deny any principle of *right or natural justice* before the invention of *civil compact*, which, they say, gave being to it; and accordingly have had the effrontery to declare, that a *state of nature was a state of war*. See Pope's Works, quarto, 1769, vol. i. p. 534—5, note.

This seems to coincide with the *vulgar* notion, of throwing the *marriage-union* on an human *outward ceremony*, or *civil compact*, without which the sexes are in a *state of war*, and each to make what depredations they can on the other: little adverting to the wise and holy provision which the CREATOR ordained against this, long before *civil compact*, arising from *marriage-ceremony*, was invented, or existed.

selves to the painful œconomy of a family-life, or confine themselves to the attention and concern which a family must require.

In every point of view, the contempt of God's law is very shocking; but be it remembered, that, though we have no municipal law to enforce its obligation, it ought to be binding and obligatory on *every man's conscience in the sight of the divine law-giver*.

There is no *statute* which punishes the defilement of our neighbour's wife, though it is a *capital* offence by God's law, and punished with the *death* of *both* the parties; yet surely none will say, that it is the less criminal before God: or, because the seventh *commandment* has no human municipal law to enforce its rigour, that therefore the consciences of individuals are under *less* obligation to observe it, or have more liberty to transgress it, than if it had.

But it sometimes happens, that a man having *enticed a maid*, &c. lives with her for a season, and then turns her off for another, not perhaps without making *some* provision for the *first*, and the conscience of the man is salved by this piece of *generosity*, as it is called. But the law of God is directly against such a proceeding—*He shall SURELY endow her to be his wife*, saith the *most High*: and the reason given for this, can never alter nor cease, because the *act* from which it arises can never be recalled. The law of God therefore as much remains in force against *such a putting away*, as against *theft or murder*.

It is not unusual for women *so put away*, to marry other men, nay, sometimes they are portioned by the *seducer* for this very purpose. This fashionable way of getting rid of women, includes in it *many* crimes. First, It is a breach of that positive law—*He shall surely endow her to be his wife*—and again—*She shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days*. Secondly, It is therefore a species of unlawful, forbidden *divorce*. It is, thirdly, *adultery* in the woman *so put away* to marry another. And, fourthly, *He that marrieth her that is put away committeth adultery*.

We never allow any thing to be *adultery* except the *outward ceremony* has passed; but God's positive commands are not subject to the controul of *human invention*. It would be a solecism in philosophy, to talk of setting the *sun* to the *dial*, and not the *dial* to the *sun*; it is as great a one in divinity, to argue, that the law of God is to be accommodated to the law of man, and not the law of man to the law of God.

Let us suppose for a moment, that, as it is said to have been the case amongst the *Spartans*, *theft* was not to be looked upon in a scandalous point of view, but * rather allow-

* *Aulus Gellius*, lib. xi. c. 18. tells us, out of an ancient lawyer, that the old *Ægyptians* held all manner of thefts to be lawful, and did not punish them. *Diodorus Siculus* mentions this law among them, that they who live by robbery were to enter their names, and bring what they stole to the *priest*, who mulcted the man that was robbed, a fourth part, and gave it to the thief. See *Patrick* on Gen. xlv. 34.

able and commendable, if done so dextrously, as that the persons were not detected in the fact; Would this shake the authority of the *eighth commandment*, or be pleadable before God as a justification of the *thief*? Consider the work of God, that which is crooked cannot be made strait, and who can make that strait which he hath made crooked? Eccl. i. 15. vii. 13.

From what has been said, I think it may be fairly concluded:

1.

That *marriage* is a divine institution, and, as such, to be abided by as revealed to us by its holy and blessed author.

2.

That those who look upon it merely as a *civil contract*, and therefore subject to the alteration and controul of men, have different views of it from those given us in the scriptures.

3.

That a woman's *person* cannot be separated from her *self*; wherever she bestows the *one*, the *other* is bestowed also.

4.

That when she delivers her *person*, and consequently her *self*, into the possession of a man, she is (if not betrothed to another) by *that* act, inseparably united to him, so indissolubly joined, that she cannot leave him, nor may he put her away all his days. *Touch not*
and take

5.

That if these truths were received, as they are indeed the truths of God, millions
of

of women (especially of the lower sort) would be saved from ruin ; for, being protected, received, and provided for as God's law enjoins, as the *wives* of those men who first enticed them, they could not be turned out upon the wide world, with the loss of reputation, friends, and consequently all power of helping themselves, but by ways too dreadful to think of !

Before I conclude this point, I must desire not to be misunderstood, as if I meant to undervalue or despise *human ordinances* ; they have excellent use, and, in this mixed state of things, are necessary to maintain that order and decency, which are so necessary for the regulation of the outward actions of men. I would rather infer their use and necessity, than doubt of either. When I say that the *marriage-service of the church*, doth not constitute a marriage in the sight of God, I say true ; because by finding no such *service* in the *Bible*, and that marriages were had and solemnized without it, I therefore conclude *that* cannot be *it* which constitutes a marriage in the sight of God ; for, if so, we must suppose that people before the invention of such service, were not *married at all*, but lived in *sin* ; which is absurd and impossible. That *some* service, or ceremony, is expedient, for many good and laudable purposes, must be allowed—as, for the public recognition of the mutual engagement of the parties to each other—to ratify their union as to inheritances,

heritances, and many other laudable ends of *civil* society ; and as none can live together as *man* and *wife*, without offence, unless they * *submit to the ordinance of man*, it ought, where it possibly can, *to be submitted to for the Lord's sake*. 1 Pet. ii. 13.

But it is a great *abuse* of such things, to put them in the place of the institution of God ; so that *this* is of no force or validity in God's sight without the other. Hence it is, that, men thinking they are not *married*, unless by a *priest* in a *church*, take advantage of their own villainy, and thus *seduce* women, and *put them away* at their pleasure ; whereas God's law binds them, in the *first instance*, and declares the bond *indissoluble*. So that, as to the purposes of the divine institution, if a thousand *priests* were to read a thousand

* This golden rule of 1 Pet. ii. 13. appears by the context, to relate to that obedience which we owe to the *civil* powers. But then the laws of *civil* government must not be inconsistent *with*, or repugnant *to*, the law of God, for if they be, we must not *submit* to them, but rather *suffer* than *obey*. When *Nebuchadnezzar* set up his *golden image*, the three children of *Israel* would not obey the king's *decree* to worship it ; they chose rather to endure the *fiery furnace*. Dan. iii. 17, 18. So Daniel vi. 10. And as it is with *civil*, so is it with *ecclesiastical* ordinances of men ; these must be consonant with God's word, otherwise we must act as the *apostles* did, *Acts* iv. 19. Men may make laws for the public recognition of a *marriage* in the *sight of the world* ; but to ordain in what *marriage* shall consist in the *sight of God*, is out of their jurisdiction, and depends solely on the appointment of God's *own* law.

services

services over the parties, these cannot add to, nor diminish from their union before God, which, as in His sight, is created by the Almighty *fiat—they shall be one flesh*. This surely must be as evident, from the whole tenor of the scripture, as that the pouring water on a person, or dipping him in water, in the name of the *Blessed Trinity*, is the complete divine ordinance of *baptism*, though no *act* is done, or *word* said, besides.

There are no where in the *Hebrew* of the Old Testament, or *Greek* of the New Testament, any specific names for *married persons*, such as the *English* words *husband* and *wife*—but אִישׁ and אִשָּׁה *man* and *woman*—So ἄνθρωπος and γυνή, which also signify persons of the *male* or *female* sex in general ; but when coupled with pronouns possessive, as אִשָּׁהּ אִישׁוֹ *her man*—אִשָּׁתוֹ *his woman*. Ὁ ἄνθρωπος σου, *thy man*—ἡ γυνή αὐτοῦ, *his woman*, they then denote the *marriage-relation* : but how that relation is entered into, so as to become indissoluble on both sides, hath already been shewn ; to which we may add some observations on the word בַּעַל which we translate *husband*, *married*. See Gen. xx. 3. בַּעַלְתָּ בַּעַל *maritata marito*. Mont. ; literally, according to our idiom, *married to an husband*. Isa. lxii. 4. וְאַרְצְךָ תִּבְעַל וְ *terra tua erit maritata*. Mont. ; and *thy land shall be married*. Now בַּעַל signifies *to have*, or *take possession*, or *authority over*, as a participial noun—ὁ ἔχων—he *who hath*.
Hence

Hence it signifies *to marry, to take possession of a woman, to have her*, as we say: See Deut. xxiv. 1. xxi. 13. In *Niph*, *to be married, taken possession of as a wife*. Isa. lxii. 4. with liv. 1. See Parkhurst's Heb. Lex. בעל. So Calasio. "Significat dominium, magisterium, dominus natus est, habuit, possedit ut dominus, maritus fuit, rem habuit cum muliere." "It signifies dominion, the place or office of a † master or governor." "As a verb, he governed, had, possessed, as a † lord or master, he was married, or, *had to do with a woman*." By all which, taken together, it appears that this *last* circumstance is *that* which brings her into the possession, and reduces her under the *dominion* of the man, according to that of Gen. iii. 16. latter part. See Deut. xxii. 29, where it is expressed by ענה *Compressit eam*. Mont.; *He hath humbled her*. English translation. Surely this affords an additional and conclusive proof, that a man's *taking possession of a woman* in the sense above-mentioned, is in the language of scripture *marrying her*, or making her אשתו *his woman*.

This appears also from Deut. xxiv. 1, where the word בעל, according to Pagninus, is used in this sense—

‡ Our English word *husband* hath this *idea*, according to Johnson—"Hofsband, master, Danish; from *house* and *bonda*, Runic, a master." See Dict.

† The *husband* is called, Exod. xxi. 3. בעל אשה *mulieris dominus*, Mont. *Lord of a woman*, Maritus. marg.

כִּי יָקָה אִישׁ אִשָּׁה וּבִעְלָהּ

eā cum coierit & fæminam vir ceperit si.

Pagninus. Mont. Marg.

Here the *taking* the woman, and *lying with her*, most clearly appears to make her the man's wife, as the rest of the verse and the three following demonstrably shew.

Bishop Patrick, on this place, observes, that “ the Hebrew Doctors make a difference “ between these two: understanding by *taking a wife*, espousing her to be his wife, “ and by *marrying her*, his completing the “ contract by *lying with her*.” The former signified by יָקָה the latter by בִּעְלָהּ.

There is another word which denotes a wife, viz. שָׁגַל—from the root שָׁגַל—which in Kal. signifies to *lie carnally with a woman*. See Deut. xxviii. 30. also Ps. xlv. 9. Neh. ii. 6. in both which latter places we have translated it *Queen*; but this it does not signify, in any other sense, but as the King's wife. Ar. Mont. renders it by *conjunx*—a yoke-fellow, or wife; συζυγιστος—Aquila. See that learned and useful work, Parkhurst's Heb. & Eng. Lex. sub voc. שָׁגַל.

I should now proceed to consider *marriage*, or *matrimony* as it is called, in another point of view, namely under *civil* considerations, and, as such, an object of *human laws*: but before this can be done in a proper manner, some incidental points must be fully understood and discussed. Therefore the subject of *matrimony*, as a *civil* contract controulable by *human* legislature, must be deferred for a season.

C H A P. II.

Of WHOREDOM and FORNICATION:

WHEN GOD, the CREATOR and LORD of all, was pleased to ordain and establish the means by which His creatures were to *increase and multiply, and replenish the earth*, in which primary command His *reasonable* creatures were equally interested with the brute part of the creation, and in some respects, if we consider *this* world as connected with *another*, infinitely more, and therefore the command was particularly addressed to them, Gen. i. 28.—it could not be but that the *act*, whereby mankind was to be propagated, must be totally *innocent* in itself: otherwise it could not have been consistent with the state † of *innocence*

† We are told, Gen. i. 31. that GOD *saw every thing that He had made, and behold it was טוב מאד very good*. We cannot, consistently with this account of things, doubt that every endowment of the human nature, whether of body or mind, came under this description; consequently, that those *desires* which were necessary to lead man to the propagation and continuance of his species, were without any evil whatsoever. We cannot sufficiently abhor the folly and blasphemy of *Jerome* and some others, who say, that “*Adam’s desire to know his wife*, was the first sin which made God repent that He had made man, and was the occasion of turning him out of *Paradise*.” Coitus præmium mors—says *Jerome* contr. *Jovinian*.

No inconsiderable difficulty awaited this scheme; which arose from the question—“How then was the world to be peopled, if not by natural generation?” But this was easily solved, by imagining that “the *earth* would have been supplied with *men*, as the *heavens* are with
“ *angels*;

cence in which man was when *marriage* was first ordained. But that this *act*, innocent in itself as any other function of the body, might be kept within due bounds of *order* and *decency*, and all confusion and disorder avoided ; God enacted certain † *positive* laws for this very purpose, to confine within such bounds as seemed good to Himself to limit, that *natural*, but *violent* passion, which, for the great purpose of propagating the *human species*, was made an *inseparable* adjunct to the *human frame*.

Those who imagine that this appetite is in itself *sinful*, either in the *desire* or *act*, charge God *foolishly*, as if He could ordain the *increase* and *multiplication* of mankind by an *act* sinful in itself : an absurdity little short of *blasphemy* ! Sin, we are told, on the most infallible authority, *is the transgression of the law*, 1 John iii. 4 ;—and *where no law is, there is no transgression*, Rom. iv. 15 :—when

“ *angels*, by the immediate creative power of God,
“ without the interference of any *generation* what-
“ soever.” See *Du Pin’s Eccl. Hist. Eng. Transf. Cent. 5.*
p. 31, where *St. Chrysostom* delivers himself to this effect.

When such monstrous opinions can have been maintained by those who, in their day, were looked upon as *fathers of the church*, let it warn thee, Reader, against searching for truth any where but in the blessed word of God ; dread as much to leave it for an instant, as a blind man would dread to walk amidst pits and precipices without a guide, or a mariner to sail among rocks and shoals without a pilot. Remember what the Psalmist says, *Pf. cxix. 105. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*

† *Conjunctio maris cum fœminâ, per quam propagatur genus humanum, dignissima res est legum curâ.* Grot. de Verit. lib. ii. § 13. “ The conjunction of the *male* with
“ the *female*, by which the human race is propagated, is
“ a matter most worthy the care of laws.”

therefore this act is done agreeably to God's will, it is like all *other* acts so done, *good* and *not evil*. In order to make it *evil*, it must be done against some precept of God's law, otherwise it is as innocent as satisfying our *hunger* with *eating*, or our *thirst* with *drinking*. These may become *sinful* by their *abuse* or *excess*; so may the *other*; but in *itself*, and in its *lawful* use, it is as perfectly *innocent* as the two *former*.

We have observed before, that where a man and woman become *personally* united to each other, they are *one flesh*, and are forbidden to *put each other away*. This is the * ordinance of marriage, and the *only* one which is revealed in the scriptures; therefore we may call it the *only* one which God ever ordained.

But when men *corrupted their ways upon the earth*, Gen. vi. 12, this ordinance of *marriage*, sanctified by God's *blessing*, Gen. i. 28, and ratified by His own *express command*, Gen. ii. 24, was, as every other *divine* institution, corrupted, perverted, and abused; and men, to satisfy their desires at as cheap a rate as possible, without the incumbrance of a wife and family, or confining themselves to the sober duties of maintaining, taking care

* Unless we agree in defining the terms made use of, no argument can be properly understood, or satisfactorily concluded. I would therefore here repeat, what I have already said—"that, as in God's sight, by *marriage-ordinance* I mean, *that*, by *which* the parties become *one flesh*—and by *marriage*, the *actually becoming so*." This *was*, *is*, and ever *must be* one and the same, in all *ages*, *times*, and *places*, however mankind may differ about the adventitious circumstances of *human ceremony*—whether *Jewish*, *Popish*, *Protestant*, *Mahometan*, or *Heathen*.

of, or providing for their households, chose to have intercourse and commerce with women, like *brute beasts*, for the sake of mere appetite, and then to leave the women for the service of the next comer. Something of this sort may not improbably be the meaning of Gen. vi. 2, where it is said, that *they took them נָשִׁים women of all which they chose*. For though this word, in certain connexions, denotes what we call *wives* (as Deut. xxi. 15.) yet it signifies primarily the *female sex*, or *women in general*. Such traffic was offensive to God, an abuse of His *ordinance*, (see 1 Cor. vi. 15, 16.) and tending to destroy the *marriage-obligation*, not only by rendering the bond which was created by it ineffectual, but by inducing mankind to despise it, and set it at nought. All *genealogies* must be confounded, inheritances obscured, and relationship itself destroyed; for who could ascertain these things, so necessary to the existence of all civil society, in the commerce with *harlots*? *Confusion*, and every *evil work*, must ensue; and therefore the all-wise Governor of the universe forbad *whoredom* and *fornication* on pain of death *temporal* and *eternal*. See 1 Tim. i. 8, 9, 10.

The *Hebrew* word נָשִׁים is particularly appropriated to this offence in the Old Testament, as πορνεία is in the New Testament; and we shall never find it mentioned but with the divine *abhorrence*. We have no law to enforce the punishment which God annexed to it, or to treat an *harlot* or *whore* as a *capital*

tal offender; but it is nevertheless offensive to GOD, and will now, as ever, meet with marks of His displeasure. *Know ye not, saith Paul, 1 Cor. vi. 9, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of GOD? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, —&c.—shall inherit the kingdom of GOD.*

So odious is *whoredom* in GOD's sight, that it is not only said to defile the parties who are guilty of it, but the very *land itself* was said to be *defiled* thereby, Jer. iii. 9. Though this *text* may perhaps primarily relate to *idolatry*, which is *spiritual whoredom*, yet it serves to shew the malignant nature of *whoredom*; otherwise this would not be made use of, as *adultery* is in the same verse, in a figurative sense, to denote the other.

GOD expressly commanded, that there should *not be a whore of the daughters of Israel, Lev. xix. 29. Deut. xxiii. 17*; and ordained, that a woman *playing the whore*, if the daughter of a common person, should *be stoned to death, Deut. xxii. 21.* but if the daughter of a *priest*, she was to *be burned with fire, Lev. xxi. 9.* I mention these things as proofs of the sinfulness of an act, innocent in *itself*, when committed against a divine positive law. No human power or custom can alleviate its guilt, or make it less offensive to GOD than His word has made it; the person's conscience that thinks otherwise is sadly deceived.

Though what has been already said may serve as a definition of this offence, yet, to save the
Reader

Reader the trouble of looking back, as well as to be still more explicit upon the subject, I would define זונה, or *whoredom*, to be “ a woman’s giving her person to a man, without any intent of marriage, but either for the mere gratification of *lust*, or for *gain* or *hire*, and departing from that man to others for the same * purposes.” This is being what the Hebrew scriptures call זונה; an *harlot* or *whore*. See Gen. xxxviii. 15, 16. The radical idea of the Hebrew זונה seems to be, to *encompass*, *encircle*, *infol*d, *enclose*; and denotes *unlawful embraces* between the *sexes*. Hence we render it, *to commit whoredom*. See Parkh. Heb. and Eng. Lex. sub voc.

As *whoredom* is generally used in our translation, as denoted by the word זונה, and seems rather appropriated to signify the *woman’s* share in the offence; so the term † *fornication*, which is expressed by the same word in the original, seems to be the name given

* After reading the above, it is hardly to be conceived with what eyes people have read this book, and yet charge the *author* with giving no definition of *whoredom*.

† Our English word *fornication*, seems to be derived from the Latin *fornix*; which literally signifies *an arch or vault in houses*—and by a *metonymy*—a *brothel-house*, because these were in *vaults* under ground. Ainsworth. Hor. Epist. 14. l. 21, 22. says to his *steward*—

——— *Fornix* tibi, & uncta popina;
Incutiunt urbis desiderium, video.

“ For well I know, a tavern’s greasy steam,
“ And a vile *stew*, with joy your heart inflame.”

FRANCIS.

Hence the haunters of those places were called *fornicators*. See *Johnson’s Dict.* Hor. Sat. lib. i. Sat. 2. l. 30, 31.

to the offence which the *man* commits in such *illicit* commerce. Though this observation may not hold in all cases, yet it is the best reason which occurs to me, for our using *different* words, to denote an offence of the *same* kind.

I readily confess, that the revival of God's antient laws against *whoredom*, amongst us, would be very dreadful, and indeed *unjust*, unless the whole consistent scheme which God has laid down was *all* to be revived together. The women, under God's law, could *force* their seducers to take them as their wives; or rather were deemed so *actually* married, as not *to be put away*. A woman had but to summon her *seducer* before the *judges*, to prove the fact against him, and their sentence, which must have been according to the law, must have been obeyed on *pain of death*. Deut. xvii. 12. Unless this were (as it ought to be) the case among us, it would be oppressive, unjust, and cruel to the last degree, to punish women with death, for being, by the treachery and villainy of men, forced into a way of life (however abhorrent in itself, or culpable) which is the natural, and, in most instances, the inevitable consequence of their being deserted by those who ought to have protected them, but against whom they have no remedy, or means to make them act the just and honourable part.

Under this head of *forbidden* lewdness, I would mention the practice of taking an *bar-*
lot

lot to keep for a time, and then, when pleasure or conveniency prompts, dismissing her. This is usually called *keeping a mistress*; but as there is no intention of *marriage*, and this is only done for the *mere* gratification of *lust*, it is not only a very evil example to others, and a defiance of the laws and good order of society, but doubtless comes under the *condemnation*, as it must be ranked under the description, of *fornication* and *whoredom*.

This was not the situation of the פילגשים or † *concubines* amongst the *Jews*; these seem to have been looked upon as *wives*, though, in some respects, of an inferior rank. They were so far considered as *wives*, that the man who took them had such a propriety in them, as to make it a very great offence, if not *adultery* itself, to violate them; as appears in the case of *Jacob's* concubine *Bilhah*. *Reuben*, the eldest son of *Jacob*, had lain with her; and

† *Dr. Johnson*, in his Dictionary, makes a *concubine* signify—"a woman kept in fornication, a whore, a strumpet:" but no such meaning of the word פילגש is to be found in the scriptures. It is greatly owing to such interpretations of words which are used in our *translation*, that we are led to have very false conceptions, not only of words, but of whole passages, in the sacred volume.

So the word *adultery*—instead of keeping to the unvaried use of the Hebrew נאף, we make it signify every thing which our ideas have annexed to the *English* term *adultery*. At this rate, the truth of scripture can never be fixed, but must alter with the languages into which it may happen to be translated, or with the ideas which change of times, or opinions, may affix to certain words in those languages.

Jacob, Gen. xlix. 4. calls it “going up to his bed and defiling it.” For this crime *Reuben* was disinherited, and put from the right of the *first-born*. Compare Gen. xlix. 3, 4. with 1 Chron. v. 1.

Though the children of the *concubine* did not inherit as the children of the wife in most cases, yet in one very remarkable one we find they did, and that by the disposal of God Himself. *Leah* and *Rachel*, are called the wives of *Jacob*; *Bilhah* and *Zilpah* were his concubines (as may appear from Gen. xxxv. 22.); yet the children of *these* inherited the land of *Canaan* equally with the children of the former.

I confess myself not master enough of the subject, to define exactly the difference between אשה a wife, and פילגש a concubine, in all respects; neither have I been fortunate enough to meet with so precise a definition in any author, as to warrant a determination of the question. What I have found upon the subject, I submit to the Reader, in the notes below †, and in the appendix to this chapter,

† The authors of the Univ. Hist. (vol. iii. p. 141.) call the נשים wives of the first rank, and the פילגשים wives of the second rank; “which last, say they, though most versions render by the word concubines, harlots, and prostitutes, yet in none of those places of scripture where the word is used, which are about thirty-six in number, is any such sinister sense implied.” However, they state a two-fold difference between *these* and the wives of the first rank. “First—that the latter were taken with the usual ceremonies, and the former with-
“ out,

chapter, which he will see at the end of this volume.

This is certain, no mark of disapprobation is set upon *concubinage* in the scriptures, though they speak so severely against *whoredom*; which, to me, is an evident and conclusive proof, that there is some specific difference between them. Indeed we find the owner of the *concubine* called *her husband*; she *his wife*. So the text, Judges xix. 1. A certain *Levite* took to him אשה פילגש *uxorem pellicem*. Mont.; *a wife concubine*: and in

“ out. Secondly, with respect to their authority, and
“ the honour paid to them and their children.”

This is very clear, that the sacred *tongue*, made use of by the *Holy Ghost* in the scriptures, makes distinctions, which amount to demonstration of there being no foundation for confounding the פילגשים with *whores* or *harlots*. The words אשה and פילגש are sometimes used for the same person. See Gen. xxv. 1. 6. (xxx. 4. with xxxv. 22.); but פילגש and זונה are never thus used.

Calasio defines פילגש as—*Ancilla unita & addicta viro absque scriptura*, i. e. *contractu dotali & sponsalibus*. “ An
“ handmaid united and devoted to a man, or husband,
“ without writing—i. e. without any contract for dower
“ or espousals.”

Busbequius expressly affirms, “ that a *wife* is distinguished from a *concubine*, in *Turkey*, merely by a
“ dowry, which seems also to have been the distinction
“ among the *Jews*.” See *Outlines of a new Commentary on Solomon’s Song*, (a most ingenious and excellent work) p. 21. written by an author to whom the world is highly indebted, for “ *Observations on divers passages of scrip-*
“ *ture*,” in two volumes—a work, which, by laying before us the *manners* and *customs* in the *East*, elucidates the scriptures of the Old Testament beyond any other comment that has yet appeared. It may be truly said of *Mr. Harmer*, that he has the happy art of making “ dark
“ things plain,” in a way, which, at the same time that it *instructs*, highly *entertains* the reader.

verse 3. he is called אִישָׁהּ *vir ejus*. Mont.; *her husband*, as we translate it. So the Fr. of D. Martin, *son mari*; and this translation seems to be very proper, because, the damsel's father is called, ver. 4. his (the Levite's) חתן *father-in-law*; and ver. 5. the Levite is called חתנו *his* (the damsel's father's) *son-in-law*; each of these relations by marriage being expressed by the word חתן. Surely this affords a conclusive proof, that the *concubines*, in those days, were in some sense *wives*; but, in what sense, it may be very difficult to determine exactly. The root חתן signifies to *contract affinity by marriage*. Gen. xxxiv. 9. Josh. xxiii. 12. In this last passage, the LXX render it by ἐπιγαμίας ποιεῖν, to *make marriages*. So that though we cannot state the precise difference between the *wife* and the *concubine* in every particular, yet there was too great a similarity between them, not to be both widely different from what we call a *kept mistress*, in whom the man claims not a jot more property, than in an horse hired for a day's journey, nor is more care or concern usually taken about them, when once the fancy or humour of the *keeper* leads him to resolve upon dismissal.

The remedy of this mischief depends on that of the others which have been mentioned; all must stand or fall together.

C H A P. III.

Of ADULTERY.

I COME now to consider an offence against the positive precepts of GOD, which is of the most malignant kind, that of *commerce between the sexes*, where the woman is the *wife*, consequently the inviolable and unalienable property of *another man*.

This is truly and properly *adultery*, and described in the *seventh* commandment by a word, which, throughout the whole *Hebrew* scriptures, is confined to that single idea. Hence it is, that it is used, in a figurative sense, to denote the turning from GOD to the worship of *idols*. GOD calls himself the *husband* of His church; the church is represented under the figure of a *spouse* or *wife*; therefore, apostatizing from JEHOVAH to *idols*, is called, in a spiritual sense, *adultery*, Is. liv. 5.
* *Thy Maker is thine husband.* Jer. iii. 14.

* The words in the original are בעלֵךְ עשֵׂךְ in the plural number, *thy husbands, thy makers*; then follows, *Jehovah Sabaoth* is HIS name. Surely here, as in Eccl. xii. 1. and in many other passages, the careful reader must see a *plurality* of persons in *Jehovah* openly revealed. To imagine, as many do, that this fundamental of *true religion* was reserved to the days of the *New Testament*, is one of those consequences of ignorance with respect to the *Hebrew scriptures*, under which *we Christians* content ourselves.

Turn,

Turn, O backsliding children, for I am married to you. Then God complains, ver. 20. Surely as a wife treacherously departs from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the Lord of hosts.

It is the misfortune of ours, as of all arbitrary languages, to want † precision ; so that
when

† One great reason of which is, the aptness of such languages to acquire new meanings by length of time. This is remarkably the case with ours ; for instance, the word *knave* formerly meant *a boy—a male child*—then a *servant boy*, and by degrees, *any servant man*. In some old English translations, I am told, that Παυλος δουλός Ιησους Χριστου, is rendered, Paul a *knave* of Jesus Christ. These meanings are obsolete, and now it signifies a *petty rascal*, a *scoundrel*, a *dishonest fellow*. See *Phillips's Dict.* and *Johnson*. So the word *lust*, which now generally, if not only, carries with it an idea of something *filthy* and *unlawful*, was used by the translators of the *Bible* to signify *lawful desire*, (Deut. xii. 15. xiv. 26.) as well as that which is evil. In *Phillips's Eng. Dict.* 6th edit. 1706, the word *lust* is thus defined—“unlawful passion or *desire*—*wantonness*—*leachery*”—so that its signification of *desire*, in a *good sense*, is totally excluded. But this cannot affect the import of the Hebrew חָמֵס, or the Greek ἐπιθυμία. Dr. *Johnson* (*Dict.* sub voc.) defines it by, 1. *Carnal desire*—2. *Violent and irregular desire*. See Ps. xxxiv. 12. *Prayer Book Translation*. Other instances of such mutation might be given. But this cannot be the case with the *Hebrew* language ; if it could, it must cease to be the word of GOD, and become the word, the uncertain word, of man.

In short, it would amount to a creation of *new laws*, which still must vary with the new use of words, and thus, from time to time, create *new offences*, in proportion to words acquiring new meanings. But the *mind* of GOD hath been graciously delivered to us in a language as unchangeable and fixed as *itself*. Therefore, what the *words* meant when recorded by the *sacred penmen*, they mean to this hour, and will mean for ever—for
which

when we speak of *adultery*, we include in it every idea which is usually affixed to the word by *custom*, whether right or wrong. There is a * precision in the *Hebrew* language peculiar to itself; every word is derived from some fixed *root*, or is itself that *root*, which has a fixed and determinate meaning; and though the word branch itself into ever so many different, and seemingly contradictory senses, yet the original idea contained in the *root* will always circulate, as the same sap from the root of a tree, will always flow through the stem to the several branches, be

which very conclusive reason, it is impossible that any word of the Old Testament can acquire a new meaning under the New Testament. Wherefore the word נאף *adultery*, can never admit of any other meaning or construction, than it received in the books of *Moses* and the *prophets*—what that was, will appear in the sequel.

How arbitrary languages have always been subject to change, by their being governed by fashion and custom, we may learn from *Horace*:

——Mortalia facta peribunt,
Nedum sermonum stet honos, & gratia vivax.
Multa renascentur, quæ jam cecidere: cadentque
Quæ nunc sunt in honore vocabula; si volet usus,
Quem penes arbitrium est, & jus & norma loquendi,
All *things* shall perish, and shall words presume
To hold their honours and immortal bloom?
Many shall rise, that now forgotten lie,
Others, in present credit, soon shall die,
If custom will, whose arbitrary sway,
Words, and the forms of language, must obey.

FRANCIS.

* The *Hebrew* language is worthy its *omniscient author*, equally free from *deficiency* or *hyperbole*: not so the *modern* languages; they have indeed *letters* to form *sounds*, but the words they compose are *arbitrary*, *uncertain*, and frequently *false*. *Hutch. Abr.* p. 41.

they

they ever so many. From the want of such precision in our language, we are apt to fix meanings to the words of scripture, which, when considered in the original, they will not bear : and in few are we more mistaken than in the meaning (the scriptural meaning) of the word *adultery*.

The words of the seventh commandment are—*לֹא תִנָּאֵף*—which we very properly translate—*Thou shalt not commit adultery*. But what is the true meaning of the word *נָאֵף* *adultery*? The only certain way to know this, is to consider its uniform signification throughout the whole *Hebrew Bible*; and whoever doth this, will find that it is never used but to denote the defilement of a * *be-trothed*

* The learned authors of the *Ant. Univ. Hist.* vol. iii, p. 137. rightly observe, that “adultery was punishable with death in both parties, whether they were both married, or only the woman.” But, they add—“We cannot affirm the punishment of a married man to have been the same, who committed adultery with an unmarried woman.” This *solecism* of “a married man’s committing adultery with an unmarried woman,” arises from the popular and improper ideas which are annexed to the English word *adultery*, and from not attending to the single and only idea annexed to the Hebrew *נָאֵף* throughout the *Bible*. Consistently with this, *Anthonyus Matthæus*, the civilian, affirms, that “adultery cannot be committed between a married man and an unmarried woman.” This is certainly true; because no trace of such an use of the word is to be found throughout the *Bible*.

And indeed, the fixing a determinate meaning to the word *נָאֵף* *adultery*, was of the utmost importance, for every man who committed *adultery* was guilty of a capital crime, and liable to be punished with *death*.—This

was,

trothed or married woman ; except in the figurative sense above mentioned, with respect to

was, therefore, too serious a matter to be left in a state of uncertainty, respecting what did or did not constitute the offence.

What *Wetstein* says on Mark x. 12. is worth attending to on this point.—*Potiora fuisse jura mariti quam uxoris inde manifestum est, quia uxor jure & consuetudine Judæorum erat in manu ac potestate viri. Porro uxor cum juvene rem habens, adulterii erat rea et morte punienda : non item vir rem habens cum innupta ; quod etiam apud veteres Christianos obtinuit.*

Basil. Can. 21. Εάν ανηρ γυναικι συνοικων, επείλα μη αρεσθεις τω γαμω, εις πορνειαν εμπεση, πορνον κρινομεν τοις ελόν—ου μείλοι εχομεν κανονα τω της μοιχειας αυτον υπαγαγειν εκκληματι, εάν εις ελευθεραν γαμος η αμαρτια γενηται—ο μείλοι πορνευσας εκ αποκλεισθηςεται της προς την γυναικα αυτης συνοκησεως, ωσε η μεν γυνη επανιοντα απο πορνειας τον ανδρα αυτη παραδεξεται, ο δε ανηρ μιανθειςαν των οικων αυτης αποπεμψει. Και τελων δε ο λογος ου ραδιος, η δε συνηθεια ελω κεκρατηκε.

“ From hence it is manifest, that the laws which related to the husband were more eligible than those which related to the wife, because, by the law and custom of the *Jews*, the wife was in the *hand*, and under the power of the husband. Moreover, a wife having to do with a young man was guilty of *adultery*, and to be punished with death. But it was not so with the husband who had an affair with an unmarried woman, which also obtained among the antient *Christians.*” — *Basil, Can. 21.* “ If a man cohabiting with a wife, afterwards, not pleased with marriage, should fall into *fornication*, we judge such an one a *fornicator.*—We have not any *canon* (or rule) to bring him under an accusation of *adultery*, if the sin should be with a woman free from marriage—nor indeed shall he that (thus) committeth fornication, be shut out from cohabitation with his wife : so that the wife shall receive the man returning from *fornication* to herself, but the man shall send away from his house a defiled wife. The reason of these things is not easy to conceive, but thus hath the custom prevailed.”

It

to *idolatry*, where the *same* idea is exactly preserved.

In *Lev. xx. 10.* we have an accurate and clear explanation of the significant word נאנ as well as of the commandment where it is found. *If a man commit adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and adulteress shall surely be put to death.* What is here called *committing adultery with his neighbour's wife*, is called, *Ezek. xviii. 11. defiling his neighbour's wife*; and *Prov. vi. 29. going in to his neighbour's wife.* If we turn to *Deut. xxii.* and consider the exposition of the *seventh* commandment which *Moses* was directed, by the *Holy Spirit*, to deliver to the rising generation, before their entrance into *Canaan*, from ver. 13. to ver. 29. inclusive, we shall find this idea uniformly preserved * throughout. See also *Lev. xviii. 20.*

So

It is to be observed, that *Basil* lived in the fourth century. If the above rule was of so long standing, as to be called συνήθεια, a *custom*, it proves demonstrably, that the very early *Christians* did not consider *adultery* as relating to any thing but to the *defilement* of a *married woman*, and of course, that the interpreting the New Testament so as to rank *polygamy* with *adultery*, is a much more *modern* invention than is usually supposed.

* נאנ “ Mæchatus est, adulteravit, adulterium commisit. *Prov. vi. 32. per metaphoram—Idola coluit. Jer. iii. 9. Differt a נאנ quod generaliter scortari significat, ut liquet ex Osee iv. 14. at hoc verbum non nisi in nuptam competit. Mercer in Pagn.*

“ R. Solomon Jarchi notat dici tantum de nuptâ.”

Leigh's Crit. Sacr.

נאנ “ To commit *adultery* with matrons. See Litt. Dict. Mæchor. to *adulterate*, to *commit adultery* [with a married woman] *Prov. vi. 29, 32—34. Metaphorically,*

So strict is this law with regard to this offence, that it even reaches to the defilement of a *betrothed* woman, who, in God's sight, is reckoned as the man's *wife* to whom she is betrothed. *If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman; so shalt thou put away evil from Israel.* Deut. xxii. 22. By these latter words we are taught, that the sin of adultery, like that of *murder*, was not to be looked upon merely as a personal offence, which was of no further consequence than to the parties committing it, but, if not punished as God commanded, brought guilt upon the very land itself, which could only

“ cally, to *worship idols*, Jer. iii. 9. It differs from
 “ זנה, which signifies *whoring* in general, as is plain
 “ from *Hosea* iv. 14. But this word *only* belongs to in-
 “ continency with a *married woman*.

“ R. Solomon Jarchi observes, it is only used where a
 “ *married woman* is concerned.”

Aben Ezra thinks, that it signifies all *illicit commerce*, even *whoredom*—“ But I see, saith *Grotius*, on *Exod.*
 “ xx. 14. that this word is taken by the *Hebrews* in the
 “ sense of *adultery* only, and so it is translated in this
 “ and the other places where it is used, by the *Greeks*,
 “ *Latins*, and other interpreters.” See *Leigh*, *ib.* and margin.

The LXX always render it by μοιχεύειν and μοιχᾶσθαι.

However, not to rely on the faithfulness of *translators*, the accuracy of *lexicographers*, or the wisdom of *commentators*, either critical or explanatory, we must have recourse to the *word itself* in the original; and if we find, that in all its connections throughout the *Hebrew scriptures*, it never is used but in *one single sense*, we are not warranted to put *any other* upon it.

be put away by the punishment of the offenders. Then follows ver. 22. *If a damsel that is a virgin be betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city and lie with her, then shall ye bring them both into the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die : the damsel, because she cried not, being in the city ; and the man, because he HATH HUMBL'D HIS NEIGHBOUR'S WIFE.*

Such is the law of THE MOST HIGH against *adultery*, or the *defilement of a man's wife*. Yet it is not the object of our *municipal* law as any *public* offence whatsoever. The injured husband may bring a civil action for private damages; but neither the *adulterer*, nor the *adulteress*, can be indicted or punished, * as a *public* offender, by any one *statute* throughout

* “ In the year 1650, when the ruling powers found
 “ it for their interest to put on the semblance of a very
 “ extraordinary strictness and purity of morals; not only
 “ *incest* and wilful *adultery* were made capital crimes;
 “ but also the repeated act of keeping a brothel, or com-
 “ mitting fornication, were (upon a second conviction)
 “ made felony without benefit of clergy. But at the re-
 “ storation, when men, from an abhorrence of the hypo-
 “ crisy of the late times, fell into a contrary extreme of
 “ licentiousness, it was not thought proper to renew a
 “ law of such unfashionable rigour. And these offences
 “ have been ever since left to the feeble coercion of the
 “ *spiritual court*, according to the rules of the canon law;
 “ a law which has treated the offence of incontinence,
 “ nay even *adultery itself*, with a great degree of tender-
 “ ness and lenity; owing perhaps to the celibacy of its
 “ first compilers. The *temporal courts* therefore take no
 “ cognizance of the crime of *adultery*, otherwise than
 “ as a private injury.” *Blackstone*, vol. iv. p. 64. Id.
 vol. i. 433.

throughout our whole code of laws. How far this is seen to be for the comfort of society, and the honour of a *Christian* nation, let others determine; I can only say, that, if the law of God (which by the way is as clear and positive a law as can be conceived) took place, we should hardly hear of such daily offences against it, as now disgrace, dishonour, and defile the land. Such however is the *consistency* of our *statute laws*, such their *conformity* to the law of God, that they make a man a *felon*, and, but for the *benefit of clergy*, liable to suffer *death*, if he have *two* wives of *his own*; but he may seduce and debauch as *many wives* of *other people*, as may fall in his way, and he is free from punishment, except, as I said before, by way of *civil* action for the wrong done to the husband.

It is said, indeed, that “* our law considers marriage in no other light but as a *civil contract*, and leaves the holiness of the marriage-state to the *ecclesiastical* courts;” but surely in a *Christian* land, “the holiness of the marriage-state” ought to be an object of the *municipal* laws, as of infinitely greater consequence to the *public*, and to the

Bishop *Burnet*, in his history of the Reformation, speaking of the state of the church before that period—saith—“The unmarried state both of *seculars* and *regulars* gave infinite scandal to the world; for it appeared that the restraining them from having *wives of their own*, made them conclude that they had a *right* to all other men’s: and the inferior *clergy* were no better, &c.” See *Crit. History of England*, p. 141.

* Blackstone Comm.

peace and welfare of society, than many other offences, which are properly deemed objects of their utmost severity. For what are the consequences of *adultery*, even in a temporal view? *All* its evils cannot be reckoned—but only to mention a *few*:—It must introduce a total confusion as to the offspring, a defeating of rightful heirs, an utter obscurity as to family descents and pedigrees; for where *adultery* is, no man can know his own children, or even ostensible brothers and sisters ascertain their relation to each other: for which, as well as for many other wise causes, doubtless it was (as well as to preserve the sanctity of the marriage-institution) made *capital* by the DIVINE LAWGIVER. This we may humbly presume to be the case; for this offence is introductory of that kind of disorder, which must, in the very nature of it, tend to destroy every bond of *civil* and religious society, and make the world, in a moral sense, a mere *chaos*.

Why then is *adultery*, notwithstanding it is so condemned by the positive law of God, so frequently, so shamelessly, so openly practised? It is because the law of God being disregarded in the conscience, and not enforced by the laws of the land in all its terror, its importance is not adverted to: for though outward laws may not reach the heart, yet, they frequently, by restraining the outward actions of men, may lead them to view such offences in a different light, than when there is no punishment attending them.

Such

Such is the depravity of mankind, that we find the saying of the *Preacher* generally true : *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.* Eccl. viii. 11. *Impunity* begets security ; and this must produce and multiply *transgression*.

As to those reliques of the *Pope's* tyranny in this country, commonly called the *ecclesiastical courts* *, their power is but very *feeble* ; for which I and every free Protestant ought to be thankful. This sort of *imperium in imperio*,

* An instance of the oppression of these courts, and the tyranny they exercise where they can, may appear from the following case :—*Ann Jenkinson* was presented at the *primary* visitation of the *Archbishop of York*, 1777, for *fornication*, she being with child by C. D. a *single man*. The case was, that the man had *promised* her marriage, not only privately to herself, but also before the *Justice*, when she swore C. D. to be the father of the child. He soon after married another woman. The *spiritual* court proceeded against the *poor girl*, thus abandoned by the man, and without ever *citing* her, sent an *excommunication* down, which was *red* and *returned* accordingly. Another was *cited* on such an account, but could not take out her *penance*, because she could not pay a certain *sum of money* which was demanded : so that it is possible she may also have been *excommunicated*.

The late Mr. *Shenstone*, in his works, vol. ii. p. 258. 4th edit. gives several definitions of the word *church*. Among others is the following, viz.—“ A body of people who too frequently harrafs and infest the *laity* according to law, and who conceal their *real* names under that of a *spiritual court*.”

No man, says Bishop *Burnet*, was more sensible of the abuses of the court called the *spiritual court*, than Archbishop *Usher* was. No man knew the beginning and progress of them better, nor was more touched with the ill effects of them. Life of Bishop *Bedell*, p. 85.

which excludes trials by *juries* in criminal matters, and substitutes paper depositions in the place of *viva voce* evidence, is too abhorrent from every principle of our free constitution to be endured ; and I am astonished, that at the Reformation, their very *being* was not annihilated, as that of the *star-chamber* was afterwards, 16 Car. I. These * *courts*, however, have cognizance of the crime of *adultery*, for which they can set the offender on a *joint stool* in a *white sheet*, under title *Penance* ; unless, under title † *Commutation*, he

* In antient times, the *King's courts*, and especially the *Lects*, had power to enquire of and punish *fornication* and *adultery* ; but by 13 Ed. I. Stat. 4. called the statute of *circumspecté agatis*, these matters were turned over to the *ecclesiastical courts*. See 1 *Burn*, 662, 663. Also 2 *Burn*, 144, 145.

† All this wicked traffic of *penance* and *commutation* was originally derived from the doctrine of *indulgences* ; concerning which, *Tetzel* and his associates, when describing the benefit of *indulgences*, and the necessity of purchasing them, a little before the *Reformation*, thus express themselves :—“ The efficacy of indulgences is so
“ great, that the most heinous sins, even if one should
“ violate the mother of God, would be remitted and ex-
“ piated by them, and the person freed both from pu-
“ nishment and guilt. For twelve-pence you may redeem
“ the soul of your father out of purgatory.”

Tetzel was sent into Germany, in the time of *Leo* the Tenth, with a large cargo of *indulgences*, which he disposed of for the raising a sum of money for the *Pope*. *Tetzel* affirmed, that he could not only pardon *sins past*, but also *sins to come* ; whereupon a German gentleman bought such a pardon of him, and afterwards robbed *Tetzel* of the money. *Tetzel* threatening him, the other said, he had bought his pardon, declaring that was the sin which he determined to commit. To which *Tetzel* could not reply.

or she can buy off their sin and shame with a *sum of money*. See 1 Burn. Ecc. Law, 663, quarto. Whatever be the cause, most certain it is, that the crime of *adultery* daily increases amongst us, insomuch, that one would think many of the *British ladies*, once famed for their modesty, chastity, and sobriety, either never red their *Bibles* at all, or else only that edition of it which was printed by the company of *Stationers*, in the reign of *Charles the First* (and for which Archbishop *Laud* fined them severely in the *star-chamber*) wherein they printed the *seventh* commandment without the word *not*, so that it stood, *Thou shalt commit adultery*.

But if in reading the *Hebrew Bible* we restrain the word נָאָד *adultery* in the *seventh* commandment, to the *married woman* only, and to the *man who defiles her*, do we not leave the man, who, having *one wife*, takes *another* *, out of its reach? I answer—It is
not

* The wise, holy, uniform, and connected scheme of God's moral government, with respect to the *commerce of the sexes*, has two principal ends in view. The *one*, to prevent all *confusion of issue*—the *other*, to secure the *female sex* from that which must lead to it. Therefore a woman's going from *one man* to *another* is in all cases made a *capital offence*, and punishable with *death*. On the other hand, no man could *take* a woman, and then wantonly *forsake* her. This, being apparently the source of * *adultery* and *prostitution*, is positively forbidden. The law which forbids this, though conceived in *general* terms, without any limitation or exception, must, in some cases, fail of the provision it has made for the above purposes,

* Matt. v. 32.

not for us to judge in this matter, but by the rule of God's word; if *that* brings such a case within the reach of the *seventh commandment*, or of any one interpretation of it which is to be found in the *book of that law*, then such a man is *condemned*: if otherwise, he is *free*—For where there is no law, there is no transgression. Rom. iv. 15. And sin is not imputed (ἐλλογείται, reckoned, charged, brought to account) where there is no law. Rom. v. 13.

By the *book of the law*, I mean the *Pentateuch*, or five books of *Moses*, delivered by God himself to that eminent servant and prophet of the MOST HIGH, and by him committed to writing, and delivered to the people. To the *book of this law* the great apostle of the Gentiles evidently refers, Gal. iii. 10. where he says, *Cursed is every one, that continueth not in all things which are written in the BOOK OF THE LAW, to do them.* Our LORD's forerunner, *John the Baptist*, declared THE LAW was given by *Moses*, John i. 17. There is therefore no law but that which was given by GOD to *Moses*, nor was any new law enacted after the canon of the *Pentateuch* was closed by the death of *Moses*. The distinction and difference of *moral good* and *evil* were then un-

without the allowance of *polygamy*; as, where the man taking the woman was married before. It is therefore necessary for us to enter deeply into this question; which I shall endeavour in the next chapter, not on the precarious footing of popular prejudice and vulgar opinion, concluding that we are wiser than the inhabitants of more extensive parts of the globe; but on the firm basis of *divine revelation*, concluding that GOD is wiser than man.

alterably

alterably fixed, and the nature of *both* invariably to remain the same. *What God doeth, it shall be for ever; nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it that men should fear before Him.* Eccl. iii. 14.

As I am fully persuaded, on the most mature deliberation, that taking from God's law in *some* points, and adding to it in *others*, are the chief causes of the evil complained of, with regard to the ruin of *one* sex, by the lust, cruelty, treachery, and perfidy of the *other*; I shall examine the subject before us the more freely: not supposing that *polygamy*, being made *felony* by that sanguinary statute 1 Jac. 1. c. 11. is therefore *sinful* in the sight of God, any more than that *adultery* is *innocent* before Him, or one jot the more so, because our statute-book has ordained no punishment for it whatsoever. Nor does its being looked upon with detestation and abhorrence in this part of the world, any more prove the *unlawfulness* of *polygamy* in the sight of God, than the approbation and practice of it in other more extensive parts of * the globe, can prove its *lawfulness*.

* The *pride* and *self-importance* so natural to fallen man, are the true reasons why people of all climes and countries are apt to imagine themselves in the *right*, and all others who differ from them in the *wrong*. The *Turk* despises the *Christian*, because he is not a *polygamist*, the *Christian* in his turn abhors the *Turk* because he is—what shall decide between them? *Custom, usage, prejudice of education, national belief, municipal laws*—have as much to plead on one side as on the other: these may say—

Non nostrum inter vos tantas componere lites.

lawfulness. All must stand or fall by God's own revelation of His *own* will, in His *own* law. To suppose that His law can be different in different parts of the world, which he *hath made*, and *upholds with the word of His power*; or that His one uniform jurisdiction doth not equally and invariably extend over all His reasonable creatures; is to think of Him as the poor idolatrous, ignorant *Syrians* did—*The LORD is God of the hills, but he is not the God of the valleys.* 1 Kings xx. 28.

Near akin to this, is the supposition that God can change his mind, and be of one mind in the *Old Testament*, and of another in the *New Testament*; if so, He may now have changed His mind again, and neither of these

The only decisive appeal which can be made, must be to the *Hebrew* scriptures, unless we are to suppose that the *Great Moral Governor* of the *universe* had no *mind* or *will* concerning the matter, or that he left his church and people in the dark for four thousand years together, touching an affair of such infinite consequence. As for imagining that he left the adjustment of *marriage* to the days of the *New Testament* (which is a popular notion amongst us) having suffered the *Jews* to live in ignorance and error concerning it for so many preceding ages—this is as false in point of fact, as if it were said, that they lived without any *revelation* at all. As surely as the writings of *Moses* contain the law of God, so surely was the law of *marriage* adjusted and settled in the minutest particular. Among other reasons why this must necessarily have been the case, is that very conclusive one, which arises from the dependence of the lawfulness of the *issue* on the lawfulness of the *marriage*, and of course the preservation of true *genealogy* throughout the whole *Jewish* dispensation; a matter in which our dearest and eternal interest is concerned.

books contain a single syllable which can be depended upon; so that after all the pains we can take to acquaint ourselves with the *divine* mind and will, we may be as utter strangers to them as the savages in *America* are.—But when we search the indelible records of truth, we find that the attribute of *unchangeableness* shines, with a distinguished lustre; *I am Jehovah*, saith He, *I change not*. Mal. iii. 6. God is *one*—His will is *one*—therefore *this*, no more than *Himself*, can know any alteration, diminution, or change. What was *law* * at the *beginning* will be *law* to the *end*; and therefore what that *law* is, as touching the point in question, I will now proceed, with the confidence which the love of truth inspires, and with a proper disregard for the fallacious and unscriptural reasonings of men, in the freest manner to consider.

* This is true even of the *ceremonial law*, as to its *meaning* and *substance*. It cannot be less true of the *moral law*, which is founded in the relation which mankind bear to God and each other, and therefore must be as *immutable* as that *relation* is.

C H A P. IV.

Of P O L Y G A M Y.

I PROMISED the *Reader*, that the proofs for what I advance should be drawn from the *word* of GOD ; and, for my own sake, as well as that of the *truth*, I find myself more especially bound to keep this promise, with respect to the subject before us : for if I were to go to *human* authorities, I should wander into such an endless labyrinth of difference and contradiction, as to lose sight of every thing but fruitless * disputation.

* Fruitless indeed ! For the great *Puffendorf*, B. vi. c. i. § 17. says—“ Whether or no this practice be repugnant to the *law of nature*, is a point not fully settled among the learned.” He then gives the arguments on both sides, “ leaving the decisive judgment to be passed by the reader.” So that upon the footing of *human wisdom*—*adhuc sub judice lis est*. The author therefore only considers it on the footing of the *divine law*, conceiving it impossible to determine its *lawfulness* or *unlawfulness* in GOD’s sight by any thing else. According to this law will all men be judged at the last day : therefore, to appeal to any other, in matters of conscience, is absurd to the last degree. There is no other principle or means of discovering the mind and will of GOD touching this, or any other religious truth, no other rule or measure of judging and determining any thing about it or concerning it, but only the *writing* from whence it is taken, it being wholly of divine revelation, and that revelation being only expressed in that writing. See Dr. Owen on the Scriptures, p. 18.

That

That the mischiefs which must inevitably attend *polygamy* on the *woman's* side, do not accrue from it on the part of the *man*, is very clear : and on this principle, we may account for the total difference which is put between them in the *divine law*—the *one* punished with *death*, the *other* not so much as mentioned in a *criminal* light. So far from being prohibited or condemned by the *law*, we find it *allowed*, *owned*, and even *blessed* of GOD : and in no one instance, amongst the many recorded in scripture, so much as *disapproved*.

By *polygamy*, I would be understood to mean *, what the word literally imports, the *having and cohabiting with more than one wife at a time*. Whether taken *together*, as seems to be the case of king *Jehoash*, 2 Chron. xxiv. 3. or first *one* and then *another*, as JACOB, Gen. xxix. 28. or DAVID, 1 Sam. xxv. 43 ; it was *this* which was *allowed* of GOD, consequently practised by His people. The *putting away* or divorcing *one* woman, in order to take *another*, was as much forbidden in the Old Testament as in the *New*. GOD says, Deut. xxii. 29. *She shall be his wife ; he may*

* *Polygamy*, strictly speaking, is of two sorts ; either when one woman promiscuously admits of more husbands than one, or when one man is at the same time joined in marriage to more than one woman—The former of these is too abhorrent from *nature*, *reason*, and *scripture*, to admit of a single argument in its favour, or even to deserve a moment's consideration. The author therefore, by the word *polygamy*, only means the *latter*, throughout this treatise.

not put her away all his days. So before, ver. 19; and again, Exod. xxi. 10. *If he take him another wife, her food (i. e. of the first wife) her raiment, and her duty of marriage, he shall not * diminish.* Putting away or divorcing a first, in order to take a second, is a palpable breach of these laws, and therefore treated by the great and infallible interpreter of them as a heinous offence against God, it being a breach of that obligation, laid upon the man, to consider his wife as *one flesh* with himself, and, as such, to cleave to her for life, as *bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh*, Gen. ii. 23; which our LORD cites, and reasons upon, to prove the abomination of such a proceeding, as absolutely contrary to the original institution of the *marriage-bond*.

This, however, was the common practice of the profligate *Jews* of that day, who abused the liberty of *divorce* permitted by *Moses* in certain cases, to the most licentious purposes, so as to make *marriage* little better than a pretence for gratifying their lusts, divorcing *one*, in order to take *another*, and thus profaning the holy ordinance of God, by giving it no higher place in their esteem, than as a means of indulging their depraved appetites. A monstrous practice! against which CHRIST's discourse, *Matth. xix. 4, &c.* is levelled, not against *polygamy*, as considered simply in itself. If we interpret this passage

* לא יגרע — not withhold — withdraw — keep back — ἀποσπῆσαι, LXX; much less shall he put her away.

as such an explanation of God's law *from the beginning*, as will serve to prove all *polygamists* are * *adulterers*, we must condemn a large generation of God's dearest servants and children; and instead of believing that *all these died in faith*, Heb. xi. 13. we must say, that many of them died in a state of *unbelief* and *disobedience*; and instead of looking for *Abraham, Jacob, David, &c.* in the kingdom of *heaven*, we must look for them in the kingdom of *Satan*; for *his* they were, and him they served, if *polygamy* be an offence against the law *from the beginning*, under which these people lived and died, without the least repentance, or any signs of it, as *adulterers, fornicators, and whoremongers*. That is the infallible † consequence of the common interpretation of this passage; for CHRIST does not ground the authority of what He declares on any *new law* which he was introducing, but on an explanation of God's law *from the be-*

* *Adultery* is marked as a mortal sin, Gen. xx. 3. in the history of *Abimelech* king of *Gerar*; and *polygamy* therein stands as utterly distinguished from it—this in the judgment of *JEHOVAH* himself. Comp. Gen. xxvi. 9, 10, 11. See post.

† *For sin is the transgression of the law.* 1 John iii. 4. *All unrighteousness* (i. e. all unconformity to the law) *is sin.* 1 John v. 17. *The soul that sinneth, it shall die.* Ezek. xviii. 4. *The wages of sin is death.* Rom. vi. 23. *Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.* Heb. xiii. 4. The weak arguments which have been made use of to excuse the *sin of polygamy*, as some call it, in the *patriarchs*, and the *Old-Testament saints*, will be fully considered and exposed in this chapter.

ginning,

ginning, revealed first to *Adam*, afterwards recorded by *Moses*, that it might be transmitted to all succeeding generations, as the one rule of faith and practice, for all those to whom God's word should come, to the end of the world. *Neither with you only, saith Moses to the people (then present at the re-publication of God's law, Deut. xxix. 14, 15.) do I make this covenant and this oath, but with him that standeth here with us this day, before the LORD our GOD, and also with him that is not (or those who are not) here with us this day, i. e. with all succeeding generations, till time shall be no more.*

Therefore CHRIST, so far from altering, changing, or destroying the law delivered from God by *Moses*, enters a *caveat* against such a supposition (Matt. v. 17.) *Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil: for verily I say unto you, 'till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, 'till all be fulfilled—ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται—until all things be done.* Hammond. And again (Luke xvi. 17.) *It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.* This not only stamps *unchangeableness* upon the law, but upon its *import, sense, and meaning*, as *one and the same* throughout all ages and generations, as an *invariable* rule of life for the members of God's *visible church* upon earth, even to the least *jot or tittle*.

Notwithstanding,

Notwithstanding, as this passage of Matt. xix. is the chief ground on which that absurd position is built, that “*Polygamy*, though
“ allowed under the *law*, is forbidden un-
“ der the *gospel* ;” or, “ though permitted
“ under the Old Testament, is * forbidden

* The notion that *marriage* under the *New Testament*, is different from what it was under the *Old Testament*, which, as will appear in a *third volume* of this work, is true genuine *Popery*, reminds one of *Moliere’s Medecin malgré lui*, where SGANARELLE is setting forth his profound *medical* and *anatomical* knowledge ; as an instance of the *last*, he places the *liver* on the *right* side, and the *heart* of the *left*.—GERONTE says —*On ne peut pas mieux raisonner sans doute. Il n’y a qu’une seule chose qui m’a choqué. C’est l’endroit du foye & du cœur. Il me semble que vous les placez autrement qu’ils ne sont. Que le cœur est du côté gauche, & le foye du côté droit.*

SGANARELLE. *Oui cela estoit AUTREFOIS AINSI : mais nous AVONS CHANGE’ TOUT CELA, & nous faisons maintenant LA MEDICINE D’UNE METHODE TOUTE NOUVELLE.*

GERONTE. *C’est ce que je ne sçavois pas, & je vous demande pardon de mon ignorance.*

SGANARELLE. *Il n’y a point de mal, & vous n’êtes pas obligé d’estre aussi habile que nous.*

“ GERONTE. One cannot, doubtless, discourse better on the subject.—There is but one thing that has
“ displeased me—I mean the situation of the *liver* and
“ the *heart*.—It seems to me, that you place them other-
“ wise than they are—that the *heart* is on the *left* side,
“ and the *liver* on the *right*.

“ SGANARELLE. Yes, it was formerly so ; but we
“ have changed all that, and now-a-days we practise
“ *physic* after a *method entirely new*.

“ GERONTE. That I did not know, and I ask your
“ pardon for my ignorance.

“ SGANARELLE. There’s no harm done.—You are
“ not obliged to be as skilful as *we* are.”

“ under

“under the *New*” (as if there could be a law in the New Testament contradictory to that in the Old Testament) it may be worth our while to consider the matter more minutely.

The question put by the *Pharisees*, Matt. xix. 3. is not, “whether it be lawful to marry *two wives* at a time, or to take *one* to another?” but—“Is it lawful for a man to PUT AWAY his wife for every cause?” The question concerns *divorce*, and *divorce only*. When we consider *who* it was that was to give the *answer*, we may be certain of its entire pertinence to the *question*. It follows (ver. 4, &c.) *He answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that He which made them at the beginning, made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and cleave unto his wife, and they twain (i. e. the man and his wife) shall be one flesh? wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore GOD hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*

With so close, so apposite, so conclusive an answer, grounded on the *old* marriage-institution, not on any *new* dispensation; they ought to have been satisfied that *divorce* was *unlawful*. But they urge him farther, and (ver. 7.) *said unto him—Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and put her away? He saith unto them, Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, SUFFERED you to put away your wives, but from the beginning it*
was

was not so (i. e. that men should put away their wives). And I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and he who marrieth her which is put away, committeth adultery.

This last is the verse which has made the difficulty; for if this were meant to condemn polygamy, it amounts, so far, to a *contradiction*; or rather *repeal*, of the *old law*, which permitted it; and then more than a *jot or tittle* has passed from the law. If it means that it was *always sinful*, and against the law of God, it condemns, as was before observed, all that ever practised it, and falls heavy on some of the greatest saints, that are recorded in scripture as patterns of *faith, holiness, and obedience*.

This difficulty, like many others in the scriptures, can only be solved, by attending to the character of the speaker, the peculiar circumstances of the persons spoken to, and the particular occasion on which the words were spoken; for want of this, we are apt to interpret the scriptures more by *sound* than *sense*, and thus make them *speak* what they never meant †.

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† You then whose judgment the right course would steer,
Know well each *antient's* proper character;
His fable, subject, scope of every page;
Religion, country, genius of his age:
Without all these at once before your eyes,
Cavil you may, but never *criticise*.

The *Jews*, at the time of their dispute with CHRIST on the subject of *divorce*, were fonder of *tradition* than of the scriptures, and of the teachings of their *rabbies*, than of the law of GOD; infomuch that CHRIST charges them (*Matt.* xv. 9.) with *teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*: and (*Mark* vii. 9, 13.) with *rejecting and making the word of God of none effect, through their tradition*. There were several famous *rabbies*, whom they highly revered, but particularly *Shammah*, *Hillell*, and *Akiba*.

* The school of *Shammah* taught, that a man could not be lawfully divorced from his wife, “unless he had found her guilty of some
“ action which was really infamous, and contrary to the rules of virtue.” But the school of *Hillell* †, who was *Shammah*’s disciple, taught, on the contrary, that “the least reasons were sufficient to authorize a man to
“ put away his wife. For example—if she
“ did not dress his victuals well, or if he
“ found any other woman he liked better.” *Akiba* was still more indulgent than *Hillell*, for he affirmed that “it was sufficient cause for
“ a man

If such requisites are necessary for judging properly of the shallow productions of mortals, how much more are those abovementioned necessary, that we may judge aright of the deep things of GOD.

* See *Cruden*, under *divorce*.

† *Shammah* and *Hillell* are supposed to have lived about an hundred years before the destruction of the second temple. Some say they were cotemporaries with *Herod the Great*. See *Ant. Univ. Hist.* vol. x. p. 429, 469.

“ a man to *put away his wife*, if she were not agreeable to her husband.”

Josephus and *Philo* shew very sufficiently, that in their time the *Jews* believed *divorce* to be lawful on every trivial cause. That the *Pharisees* had learnt to explain the toleration of *Moses* in a like extensive manner, may be gathered from the question which they put to our SAVIOUR. The above observations may therefore serve as a key to the scripture under consideration. The *Pharisees* (who asked, whether it *was lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?*) seem to have been deeply tinctured with that position of *Hillel*, and to have adopted that particular cause of *divorce* mentioned by him, that of *seeing a woman they liked better, so putting away one whom they liked less, in order to take another whom they liked more*. Against this CHRIST may be understood to level his answer—*Whosoever putteth away his wife, except for the cause of fornication, and marrieth another, committeth adultery, &c.* not as condemning *polygamy* in itself, against which there *was no law*, but under the particular circumstance

Of *Akiba* it is said—*Circa ea tempora vixit*—“ he lived about those times.” *Athan. Vinc.*

Dr. Owen on the scripture, p. 227, makes him *armour-bearer* to the Pseudo-Messias *Barchochab*, in the days of *Adrian*; when, in the pursuit of a design to restore their temple and worship, the *Jews* fell into a rebellion against the *Romans* all the world over. This was about the year 135. From these different accounts, it seems probable that there was more than one person of the name of *Akiba*, or, as some call him, *Aquiba*.

of unlawful *divorce* to effect it, against which the law of God was from *the beginning*. Such a thing was not contained in *Moses's permission*, nor mentioned therein, but was contrary to the very *institution of marriage*; and, as our LORD shews clearly, ver. 4, 5, 6, virtually forbidden by the very words of it. It was as unlawful for a *man* to put away or *divorce* his wife for *another woman*, as for a *woman* to put away or *divorce* her husband for *another man*: the *marriage-bond* being *equally* binding as to the matter of *putting away*. We may also observe, that though the *saints* of GOD, of whom we read so much in the Old Testament *, practised *polygamy*, yet they did not put away *one wife* in order to make room for

“ * The example of the *Heathens* and *Mahometans* may indeed be of no great force in the argument for *polygamy*, because it appears that those people are guilty of many violations of the law of nature; but the *polygamy* of the *fathers* under the *old covenant*, is a reason which ingenuous men must confess to be unanswerable.” See *Puffendorf*, lib. vi. c. i. § 18.

Some have thought, that the examples of *Abraham*, *Jacob*, and the other Old-Testament saints, are too far removed into antiquity, to serve as proofs for the lawfulness of *polygamy*.—But did ever any one object to the history of *Cain*, as an example of the criminality of murder, or of GOD's thoughts on that subject? or does the *Apostle*, in the epistle to the *Hebrews*, scruple to recapitulate, by *name*, those heroes of antiquity, who did such mighty works by the power of faith, as examples to us? In short, doth he not assure us, Rom. xv. 4. *That WHATSOEVER THINGS were written afore-time, were written for our learning?* But what can we learn from either the *precepts* or *examples* of *old time*, if we are to suppose that GOD has changed his mind upon the subjects which they hold forth to us?

another.

another. This was as directly forbidden them by the law of God, delivered by *Moses*, as by CHRIST, on the authority of that law, to these *Pharisees*.

Here I would observe, that our translators of the *Bible* seem to have paid too much attention to the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, in the rendering the passage referred to for the justification of their doctrines about *divorce*. The *Pharisees* say, *Moses* COMMANDED to give a writing of divorcement, and put her away. Thus the *rabbies* construed *Deut. xxiv. 1*, &c. in the *imperative* mood; and we, by doing the same in our translation of that passage, have justified their misinterpretation, and even justify the *divorced woman's* going to be *another man's wife*. *She may go, and be another man's wife*; so we translate, verse 2. No marvel, if this be the case, that CHRIST is supposed to condemn something which was before allowed; whereas the whole passage is suppository or *hypothetical*, and only introductory of that positive law, ver. 4. The whole should be rendered thus, if we would avoid the absurdity of supposing *Moses* to command, what God positively forbad, and to consign a *married woman* into the arms of an *adulterer*, in the very face of the *seventh* commandment, by saying, “*She may go and be another man's wife.*” ver. 2. This would be establishing † *adultery* by a solemn law.

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† The learned *Dr. Whitby*, in order to get rid of this consequence, is for supposing, that these divorces dis-

The *Hebrew* text should be rendered—
When, (or if) a man hath taken a wife, or woman, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her, and (IF) he write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house, and she shall have departed out of his house, and (IF) she go and be another man's wife, and IF the latter husband hate her, (here we explain the 1 by an IF, why not before?) and write her a bill of divorcement, &c. or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife, her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to his wife after that she is DEFILED, for that is abomination before the LORD, and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy GOD giveth thee for an inheritance.

Thus the *Greek* * interpreters express the sense of these four verses, and the *Vulgar Latin*,

solved the *bond of marriage*; but this is directly contrary to what *CHRIST* asserts, for his whole argument shews, that nothing can do this, but *adultery* in the wife. The *Doctor* was certainly led into this mistake, by our wrong translation of the passage, in *Deut. xxiv. 1—4*.

* To the testimonies here mentioned, for this interpretation of the *Hebrew* text, we may add that of the learned *Buxtorf*; who observes, that in the words of *Moses*, *Deut. xxiv. 1—4*. (see *Jer. iii. 1*.) this one prohibition only is contained,—“*That a man shall not receive again to his bed, a wife which he hath once put away*”—but that the custom itself of putting away wives, is, in that place, neither approved by *Moses*, nor plainly condemned, but left as it were indifferent. And the observation of our *Saviour*, that this permission was given by *Moses*, because of the hardness of their hearts, sufficiently makes

Latin, yea, and the *Chaldee* paraphrase may be so understood. So *Tremellius* renders the words, and *Vatablus* explains them, *Scripseritque ei libellum repudii & dederit Ei in manu, ejeceritque, &c.* IF he shall have written her a bill of divorce, &c. “This is not an absolute sentence,” saith *Vatablus*, “but ought to be joined to the words following, which shew that IF such things happened, that IF a man divorced his wife, and IF another took her, the former husband might not take her again, she having been *defiled*.” Which proves the same thing contended for by our LORD, in His discourse with the *Pharisees*, that those *permissive divorces*, which, says He, *Moses permitted*, ἐπέτρεψεν—not, as the *Pharisees* would have it, ἐνετείλατο, *commanded*—made no difference as to the *marriage-bond* in the sight of GOD. The man who put away his wife, for no other cause than marrying another, which was the practice of these people, committed a great sin, not only by not cleaving to his wife, as GOD had commanded, but by putting her away for another woman, and thus causing her to commit adultery with another man. See Matt. v. 32. And in this sense, as *accessary* to his divorced wife’s crime,

makes it appear, that the *Mosaical* indulgence doth not amount to an approbation, but signifies only a bare toleration, or connivance, exempting from *civil* punishment. See *Puffend.* b. vi. c. 1. § 23.

So *Clark* on Matth. xix. 8. intimates, that “*Moses* permitted divorce to prevent a greater civil mischief. He did so far allow of it, as to exempt them that did it from any *civil* punishment, but still it was a transgression of the *moral* law, and so a sin against GOD.”

might himself be said to *commit adultery*. But more of this hereafter.

If those *divorces* could have operated, as a *dissolution* of the *first* marriage, she would not have been *DEFILED* by marrying another man; but this not being the case, she was *DEFILED** in the sight of *GOD*, when put away by *unlawful divorce*, as when she went to another man without *any divorce*. Very striking are the words of *Jer. iii. 1.* *They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return to her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted?—*But where is any thing like this said of *polygamy*? That *polygamy* was practised throughout all ages of the *Jewish æconomy*, cannot be denied. It is equally evident, that it was the deliberate, open, avowed, and wilful practice of the most *holy* and *excellent* of *the earth*, of *Abraham*, the *father* of the *faithful*, the *friend* of *GOD*, *Is. xli. 8.* as well as of the most illustrious of his children; and this, without the least *reproof* or *rebuke* from *GOD*, or the most distant hint or expression of his displeasure, either by *Moses*, or any other of the prophets. No trace of *sorrow*, *remorse*, or *repentance*, touching this matter, is to be found in any one instance, and therefore many commentators are at a loss to maintain the *sinfulness* of *polygamy*, but at the expence of *scripture*, *reason*, and *common sense*.

* The word (*Deut. xxiv. 4.*) which we translate *defiled*, is *נָדָם*. The same word is used, *Ezek. xviii. 6, 11, 15.* for *violating another's wife*.

Some say—"It was a *sin*, but GOD * allow-
 ed it for the *hardness of their hearts*." That
Moses suffered (ἐπέτρεψεν, *permitted, tolerated*)
divorce, so far as not to exact the outward
 punishment of it in certain cases, is evident
 from the *supposed* circumstances in *Deut. xxiv.*
1, &c. But this was in order to avoid worse
 mischief amongst the wicked and profligate
 part of the community, such as mal-treating,
 beating, or even killing their *bated* wives.
 This is what we may suppose, in part at least,
 to be meant by our LORD, when He says—
Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts,
suffered you to put away your wives. This is
 said of *divorce*, not of † *polygamy*, as plainly
 appears by the words of the text. And here-
 in *Moses* seems to have acted more as a *poli-*
tician, than as a *lawgiver*—by *permission*, not

* The idea of JEHOVAH's allowance of *sin*, and that
 for ages together, is placing him, in point of holiness,
 purity, and justice, below the notion which the heathen
 had of their gods—*Homer* says—

Οὐ γὰρ χεῖλια ἔργα θεοὶ μάκαρες φιλέουσι. *Odyss. E. ver. 85.*

*Yet sure the gods their impious acts detest,
 And honour justice, and the righteous breast.*

Pope. See *Pf. v. 5.*

† The learned authors of the *Universal History*, vol.
 iii. p. 137, observe, that *Moses*, among other things,
 "was forced to indulge them (the *Jews*) in *polygamy*."
 —But what could this have to do with *Abraham*, *Jacob*,
 and those who lived before *Moses*? It is evident that *po-*
lygamy was practised by the holiest of the saints, ages be-
 fore *Moses* existed; therefore, ascribing the practice of
 it to an *indulgence* of *Moses*, is as great a mistake, as as-
 cribing the original of *circumcision* to the law of *Moses*.
Comp. Gen. xvii. 10—14. with John vii. 22.

by

by *commandment*, like that of *Paul*, 1 Cor. vii. 6. It is not said—*GOD suffered it*—but—*Moses suffered you to put away your wives*: but, *CHRIST* adds, *from the beginning it was not so*—i. e. that men should *put away their wives*. Here is not the least hint about *polygamy*.

Can we suppose, however, that *GOD* suffered *Abraham*, *Jacob*, *David*, and others of His saints, to break His law, and this for the *hardness of their hearts*?—If *they* had *hearts of stone*, who ever had an *heart of flesh*? Ezek. xi. 19. Do not reason and common-sense start back at *such* a supposition?

Others have as absurdly said, “that, *GOD*, “being the sovereign, has a right to *dispense* “with his own laws, and having ‡ done this, “*polygamy* was no sin.”

We

‡ The elaborate *Noldius*, after long arguments upon the subject, pro and con, of his own and other people's, which may all be seen Heb. Part. Annotat. 225. concludes—*Sanctos veteres polygamos non peccasse coram Deo, quia habuerunt dispensationem specialem & extraordinariam*.—“The old saints, who were *polygamists*, did not “sin before *GOD*, because they had a *special and extraor-* “*dinary dispensation*.” But, 1. Where is such a *dispensation* recorded? 2. The very supposition of such a thing is as absurd as it is profane; more becoming the character of a *Pope of Rome*, than of the *HOLY GOD*. 3. The idea of a *special and extraordinary dispensation* to some, and leaving others under the guilt of sin, seems to be borrowed from the speech of one of the doctors (*Soto*) at the famous council of *Trent*, who said, “The antient fa- “*thers* had *many wives* by dispensation, and the others, “who were not dispensed with, did live in perpetual “sin.”—*Hist. of Council of Trent*, Eng. Transl. by N. Brent, p. 671. This directly militates against the *univer-*
sality

We find particular occasional instances of God's dispensing with the rigour of His laws on certain emergencies, and for particular purposes—as in DAVID's eating the *shew-bread*, which it was not lawful for any but the *priests* to eat. Also in some other instances which might be mentioned. But where do we find a *total* suspension of one of the commandments of the *moral* law for ages together? If it was as great a sin for a man to have *two* wives, as for a woman to have *two* husbands, why suspend it on the part of the *man*, and not on the part of the *woman*? Why invariably ordain punishment on *one* side, and not on the *other*, if each was equally sinful against the law itself? *Doth* GOD *pervert* judgment? *Or doth the Almighty pervert justice?* Job viii. 3. GOD *is no respecter of persons*. Acts x. 34. *He accepteth (i. e. with undue and partial favour) no man's person*. Gal. ii. 6. *As many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law*. Rom. ii. 11, 12. Nor is it conceivable that the righteous JUDGE OF ALL should Himself depart from the rule laid down for his *vice-gerents*, the *judges of*

salut of the law, Deut. xxi. 15, which is conceived in as general terms as possible, and most clearly supposes that *any man* might have *two wives*. The *Levirate*, or law, Deut. xxv. 5, 6. which *Noldius* calls a *dispensation* for marrying the brother's wife, contrary to Lev. xviii. 16. is very improperly called so, it being a *positive commandment*, established for a *particular purpose*, and both the law itself, and the reason of it are there set down. This is not the case with *polygamy*, for there is no law which prohibits it, nor any to establish a *partial* allowance of it.

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the earth, (Deut. i. 17.) Ye shall not respect persons in judgment. No other account then can consistently be given of the matter, than what may be gathered from the uniform and unvaried use of the word *זנות*—*adultery*—in the *seventh* commandment, as relating to the *wife*; that is to say, as forbidding *polygamy* on *her* side, but not to the *husband* as forbidding *polygamy* on *his*.

Others would make the wise, holy, great, and good men, who were *polygamists*, wholly *ignorant* of the law, as to the true meaning thereof, and say—“*The times of ignorance* God “*winked at*”—wresting this text (*Acts* xvii. 30.) which speaks of the blind *Gentiles*, who were without the *written law* of God, and making it relate to the *Jews*, to whom *were committed the oracles* of God. *Rom.* iii. 1, 2. But, waving this, was ABRAHAM, that *prophet*, *Gen.* xx. 7. whom God, from the familiar intercourse He had with him, calls *His * friend*? (*Is.* xli. 8.) —was *Jacob*, who spake with God *face to face* (*Gen.* xxxii. 30.) *ignorant*? Could MOSES, the sacred penman and expounder of the law, be *ignorant*? so *ignorant*, as not to know its true meaning? Could

* God saith, *Gen.* xviii. 19. *Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?—for I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment.* How Abraham could teach others to *keep the way of the LORD*, and yet be *ignorant* of it himself, cannot easily be conceived. *If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.* *Matt.* xv. 14.

DAVID be *ignorant*? If so, to how little purpose was his *study in it all the day long*? Pf. cxix. 97. Are we to suppose *Solomon* ignorant, to whom God said—*Lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart, so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee?* 1 Kings iii. 12. See 1 Kings iv. 29, &c. Comp. Matt. xii. 42. Luke xi. 31. Such a solution of the matter will more easily prove the *ignorance* of such commentators, than their assertions prove *ignorance* in the holiest and wisest men that ever lived under the light of the Old Testament, where alone God's law is to be found, and on the authority of which the whole New Testament can only * stand. The *kings of Israel* were expressly commanded to write a copy of the law with *their own hand*; it was to be *with them*, and they were to *read in it daily*. Deut. xvii. 18, 19. The *Priests* and *Levites* could not be *ignorant*; for their *lips were to keep knowledge*, and the people were to *seek the law at their mouth*. Mal. ii. 7. As for the *people*, they not only *heard the law* constantly, but were commanded to write it

* *Ignatius*, Epist. ad Philadelph. c. 8. introduces a *Jew* saying—Εαν μὴ ἐν τοῖς ἀρχαίοις εὕρω ἐν τῷ Ἐυαγγελίῳ ἢ πιστεύω—nisi invenero in antiquis (vaticiniis) Evangelio non credo: which I heartily assent to, thus paraphrased—“What I do not find in *Moses and the prophets*, I'll not believe in the *gospel*.” But there is no danger of this, no hazard of being put to such a trial; for certainly the New Testament saith *none other things than Moses and the prophets did say should come to pass*. Acts xxvi. 22. See Rom. xv. 4. Luke xxiv. 44, 45.

upon the very *door-posts of their houses*. Deut. vi. 9. Whatever else, therefore, their *polygamy* proceeded from, it could not be derived from *ignorance*. They could not be *ignorant* of the *seventh* commandment ; and supposing that many of them, like their descendents in later times, lost sight of its *spiritual intendment*, yet the meaning of its *outward letter* they could hardly be at a loss for, especially as they must observe its uniform and unvaried use throughout the whole of their scriptures. If, therefore, *polygamists* sinned against the *seventh* commandment, they did it with their eyes open ; and whosoever can believe that such men as we have mentioned, could do this without any scruple before-hand, or sorrow afterwards, or the least sign of repentance, must believe more than, for their sakes, and the sake of thousands of God's saints (who though not mentioned as *polygamists*, doubtless were so) I could wish even to surmise, or than is in the least consistent with the account which we have of them in the holy scriptures.

I shall only observe farther on this head, of attributing the practice of *polygamy* by the Old-Testament saints to *ignorance*, that we must charge *ignorance* on God's high-priest *Jehoiada*, who stands recorded, 2 Kings xii. and 2 Chron. xxiv. as one of the wisest, best, and greatest characters that ever lived, as likewise one of the most exemplary promoters of God's honour, and a chief instrument of the reformation of religion in *Judah*, in the reign
of

of king * *Jehoash*. If so, our charge of *ignorance* will not stop here, but even reach the *Spirit of God Himself*. For He says, that *Joash did right in the sight of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada the priest*, 2 Chron. xxiv. 2. or (as it is 2 Kings xii. 2.) *all his days, wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him*; and yet we are told, ver. 3. that *Jehoiada took for him TWO WIVES, and he begat sons and daughters*. On whom shall the commentator fix *ignorance*? On *Jehoiada* the high-priest, for teaching his pupil king *Jehoash* to be a *polygamist*, by taking for him *two wives*? or on *Jehoash*, who received them, and *cohabited with them*? or on the *Holy Ghost*, who bears testimony to the *rectitude* of king *Jehoash's* conduct, *all his days wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him*?

The learned Bishop *Patrick*, on 2 Chron. xxiv. 3. says, that “ *Jehoiada did not take these two wives for the king, but for himself.*” Supposing it to be so, the proof of the lawfulness of *polygamy* in *Jehoiada's* opinion is equally strong. But this sense of the *Bishop's* will hardly arise from the position and construction of the *Hebrew* text: for it does not stand in the order of our translation—*And Jehoiada took for him two wives*—so as to make *him* the relative to *Jehoiada*; but

| | | | | | |
|----------|----------|------------|--------|----------|-----------|
| uxores | duas | Jehoiada | ei | tulit | Et. Mont. |
| וְשָׁתָם | שְׁנַיִם | יְהוֹיָדָא | לֵה | וַיָּבִי | † |
| wives | two | Jehoiada | him to | brought | And |

So

* Called *JOASH* also, 2 Chron. xxiv.

† The verb וַיָּבִי certainly signifies to take a wife for
2. one's

So that the *וְלֵאמֹר*—*to him*—stands as the relative to the chief subject of the preceding verse, which is evidently king *Jehoash*, whose history the sacred penman is here recording, as a part of which this action of *Jehoiada's* is here related.

The *Bishop* is conscious of a difficulty in his interpretation, arising from a constant tradition of the *Jews*, that the *high-priest* was to have but *one wife* at a time, which was founded on *Lev. xxi. 13, 14*. This he endeavours to get rid of by saying—"It is not certain that *Jehoiada* was *high-priest*, for he is every where called *Jehoiada the priest*, and but once only (ver. 6.) the *chief*."—But this is no argument at all against his being *high-priest*, for *Abiathar*, who was *high-priest*, is no where called so in the Old Testament, but always *the priest*; so his father *Abimelech*, as the *Bishop* himself observes on *1 Sam. xxi. 1*; so *Eli the priest*, *1 Sam. ii. 11*; *Zadoc the priest*, *1 Kings iv. 2*. *1 Chron. xxix. 22*; and even *Aaron* himself, *Psa. xcix. 6*. The title of *שָׂרֵם*—the *chief*, or *head*, which is given to *Jehoiada*, ver. 6. signifies certainly more than "the chief of one of the courses of priests."—His having apparently the conduct and management of every thing * relating to the temple, his anointing king *Jehoash* (comp.

one's self—but it also signifies to *take* or *bring* a wife for another. See *Ezra ix. 2, 12*. *Neh. xiii. 25*; in which passages the word *שָׂרֵם* is used in both these senses.

* As well as the entire management and command over all the *Priests* and *Levites*. See *2 Chron. xxiii. 4—8*.

1 Kings

1 Kings i. 45.) and many other circumstances related of him, bespeak him plainly to be no less than high-priest; and therefore the word שרף—*chief*, or *head*—denotes this here, as it does that *Seraiah* was † high-priest, 2 Kings xxv. 18. For all which reasons it seems clear, that *Jehoiada* (who had before married *Jehoshabeath*, the sister of king *Abaziah*, 2 Chron. xxii. 11.) took not these *two wives* for himself, but for king *Joash*.

These things are too plain not to force conviction on the minds of many; therefore it is that they have said with the learned author of the “*Historical Library*”—“*Polygamy*, though not expressly *allowed*, is “*however tacitly implied* in the law of Moses.” This is going farther than those I have mentioned, but yet does not come up to the matter. For if it be forbidden by the *seventh* commandment, or by any other law, it is as contradictory to scripture to say, that it was *tacitly implied*, as that it was *expressly allowed*. This last is the truth; it was *expressly allowed*, and that by God *Himself*: a direct proof this, that it was not forbidden by the *seventh* commandment, or by any other law, unless we can suppose the all-wise God to be so inconsistent with Himself, as to *forbid*, and yet *allow*, the same thing under the same circumstances.

† That *Seraiah* was descended in a right line from *Eleazar* the son of *Aaron*, appears 1 Chron. vi. 4—14. and of course succeeded to the *high-priesthood*. As such he is registered. Ibid.

Some have found out, that “ *polygamy* was
 “ allowed for the more expeditious peopling
 “ of the world.”—Supposing it is a mean of
 increasing * *population* (which by the way will
 admit of great doubt) yet where was the use
 of this amongst the *Jews*, when, before their

* This common notion, or rather *vulgar error*, is
 adopted by *St. Augustine*, *De Civ. Dei*, lib. xvi. c. 38.
 where, speaking of the antient *polygamy*, he says it was
 lawful—*Quoniam multiplicandæ posteritatis causâ plures*
uxores lex nulla prohibebat. “ Because, for the sake of
 “ multiplying posterity, no law forbade many wives.”—
 Thus thought many of the *fathers*, and the *Romish*
 church in general, till the doctrine of *dispensations* was in-
 troduced; then they said it was a *sin*; but God gave a
dispensation to some to practise it—thus artfully making
 the *Holy God* a dispenser with *sin*, and setting an example
 for the *Pope's* first making *sins*, and then *dispensing* with
 them. But let us suppose ten men and ten women—can
 it be imagined, that if these ten women are each severally
 married to one *man*, they are not likely to have as many
 children as if they were all married to one of the men?
Porter, in his *Observations on the Turks*, says, p. 292,
 that the number of children in *Turkish* families is not
 what the idea of *polygamy* suggests; that they have not,
 in general, so many children as are found in common fa-
 milies of *Christians and Jews*—He even uses this as an
 argument against *polygamy*. On the other hand, many
 have contended for the permission of *polygamy* as “ a
 “ speedier means of peopling the world; it appearing,
 “ that in *polygamous* countries, people abound more than in
 “ others that are *monogamous*.” But I take the real state of
 the case, upon the whole, to be this; wherever there are the
 most married women, there the increase of the people will be
 the greatest. *Polygamy*, therefore, as tending to increase
 the number of married women, must certainly tend to *po-*
population. But then we are to suppose, that women who
 are married under *polygamous* contracts, would not other-
 wise be married at all; for in no other view can *polygamy*
 be said to increase *population*; in this it certainly must.

entrance

entrance into *Canaan*, they were as the *stars in heaven for multitude*? Deut. i. 10; and yet *polygamy* did not cease after their entrance into the *promised land*.

As for all *popular* arguments against *polygamy*, which the wisdom of this world has invented, and believed as so many certain conclusions on the side of truth, they equally apply against the wisdom and holiness of God in *allowing* it, as against those who *maintain* it: therefore, as *He will be justified in His sayings, and clear when He is judged*, Rom. iii. 4. the best answer which can be given, for the present, is that included in the awful question of the *Apostle*, Rom. ix. 20. “*Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?*” Though this immediately relates to another point, yet it is applicable to all the vain reasonings of men against the dispensations of *Providence*, either in the *natural* or *moral* world. Which said reasonings, when thoroughly canvassed, and set in their true light, will appear to be neither more nor less, than the pleadings of human *pride*, on the behalf of human *ignorance*. Our prejudices and our opinions reciprocally affect each other, and, upon examination, they will usually be found as much alike as the *image* and the *mold* it is cast in.

- “ Go wiser thou, and in thy scale of sense,
- “ Weigh thy opinion against *Providence*—
- “ Call imperfection what thou fanciest such,
- “ Say, *here* He gives too little—*there* too much—
- “ Snatch from His hand the balance and the rod,
- “ Rejudge His justice, be the God of God.

“ In pride, in reas’ning pride, our error lies,
 “ All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies ;
 “ And who but wishes to invert the laws
 “ Of *order*, sins against th’ ETERNAL CAUSE.
 “ All this dread *order* break—for whom ?—for thee ?
 “ Vile worm ! Oh madness ! pride ! impiety !
 “ Go teach ETERNAL WISDOM how to rule,
 “ Then drop into *thyself*—and be a *fool*.
 “ From pride, from pride, our very reas’ning springs—
 “ Account for *moral*, as for *nat’ral* things :
 “ Why charge we *Heaven* in *those*, in *these* acquit ?—
 “ In *both*, to *reason* right, is to *submit*.”

Essay on Man.

In fewer, but in still more forcible and hum-
 bling words, doth *Paul* express himself to the
self-wise among the *Corinthians*—and in *them*
 to *us*—1 Cor. iii. 18, 19.—*Let no man deceive*
himself—*If any man among you seem to be wise*
in this world—ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τῆς γῆς—like the phi-
 losophers, politicians, and rabbies of the age,
 (GUYSE) *let him become a FOOL that he may*
be wise—*for the wisdom of this world is FOOL-*
ISHNESS with God.

Though it be beside my design, in this
 treatise, to consider the subjects thereof on
 any other footing than as they appear in the
 scriptures ; yet I will so far depart from my
 purpose, as to take notice of a *popular* argu-
 ment *against polygamy*, which, in the minds
 of some learned and considerate men, has been
 of such importance, as to outweigh all that
 could be said *for* it. It is this—“ The *males*
 “ and *females* brought into the world are
 “ nearly on a balance, only allowing a little
 “ excess on the side of the *males* ; whence it
 “ follows, that nature intends only one wife
 “ for

“ for the same person ; if they have more,
 “ some others must * go without any.” This
 argument,

* So must it be even upon the principle of *monogamy* ; for if, according to these calculators, there be more *males* than *females*, it is not possible that *every* man can have a *wife* ; some *must go without*. However, a departure either way from the original proportion of *one male* and *one female*, destroys all arguments which can be drawn from thence against *polygamy* ; for the precedent which this might otherwise have been, being departed from by the *Creator* himself, it of course ceases with respect to his creatures. Major *Grant* observes, that a little excess on the side of the *males*—“ is to make up for the extraordinary expence thereof in *war* and at *sea*”—to which others have added, as a consideration also, “ the laborious and dangerous employments in which men are engaged, and women are not.” As for *war*—it is written—*Whence come wars and fightings among you ? Come they not hence, even of your lusts* (ἡδονῶν, the desires after sensual gratifications) *which war in your members ? Ye lust and have not, ye kill and desire to have, and cannot obtain, &c.* James iv. 1, 2. So *Plato* in his *Phædo*, § 10. Edit. Cantab. 1673, p. 88. καὶ γὰρ πολέμους καὶ στάσεις καὶ μάχας οὐδὲν ἄλλο παρέχει ἢ τὸ σῶμα καὶ αἱ τῶν ἐπιθυμιαί. “ *For nothing but the body and its lusts* (or evil desires) *produce wars, seditions, battles.*” Can it be reasonably supposed, that the *Almighty*, whose gracious command is—*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*—is directed, in the proportion of *males* and *females*, by the most horrid and fatal proofs which men are daily giving of their enmity to *Him* and each other ! and that more men than women are born into the world on this account ?

These *wars*, together with the extension of commerce, and the calls of numberless artificial wants which luxury has introduced, certainly expose the lives of men to the dangers of the *sea*. But who hath required this at their hands ?—Let an *Heathen* give the answer :

*Nequicquam DEUS abscidit
 Prudens oceano dissociabili
 Terras, si tamen impicæ
 Non tangenda rates transiliunt vada.*

argument, plausible as it may seem, wants one essential to *solidity*, which is *truth*. For saying

*Audax omnia perpeti
Gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas.*

HOR.

GOD hath the realms of earth in vain
Divided by th' unhabitable main,
If ships profane, with fearless pride,
Bound o'er th' inviolable tide.
No laws, or human or divine,
Can the presumptuous race of man confine.

FRANCIS.

GOD hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions, saith Solomon, Eccl. vii. 29. To imagine that the providential dispensations of the ALL-WISE GOD, are to be accommodated to *these*, or regulated by them, is surely too absurd to bear an argument.

As for “laborious employments, many of which are “attended with danger, and which usually fall to the “share of the *males*,” let as many of these be selected as can be deemed *necessary*, and then, against them, let us set—the many diseases to which *females* are peculiarly liable, and to which *men* are *not*—let us add to these the peril of child-birth, and then, this last supposed *reason* for more males being born than *females*, will be as groundless as the two former.

I should imagine, that no opinions whatsoever, however false and absurd, are without having *reasons* given for them. Nor is it to be doubted, that a *Ptolemaist* would give as many reasons for the *sun's* going round the *earth*, as a *Copernican* would for the *earth's* going round the *sun*.

The following question is said to have been once laid before a certain very learned body:—Take a tub of water weighing one ton weight—into which put a *salmon* of thirty pounds weight; Why will not the tub be heavier than before the fish was put into it? The fact being taken for granted, produced many *wise* reasons for it; but none were thought *so wise* and adequate, as—*Corpora non gravant in loco suo*—therefore the *fish* being in its *place* or proper element, lost its power of adding any thing to the weight of the tub of water. At last, it was proposed

saying which, I will, by way of justification, transcribe a few paragraphs from *Dr. FORSTER's "Observations during a Voyage round the World"*—published 1778. This ingenious author, who seems to be a most strenuous *monogamist*, after speaking of "*Monogamy* established in the isles of the *South Sea*," very candidly says—"But here I find myself obliged to confess, that I am not as yet persuaded of the great and universal argument for *monogamy*, viz. the *equal proportion of women to men*; as, in my opinion, it is not clearly proved that this just proportion holds place in all countries and climates. On the contrary, I am of opinion, that the constitution of food and climate, and the prevailing custom of marrying many wives, have, by length of time, produced a considerable disparity between the numbers of men and women; so that now, to one man, several women are born. This observation is really confirmed by fact; for *all* the voyagers unanimously agree, that among all the *African* nations *polygamy* is customary; nor has any one observed that there are men among these nations *without wives*, for every one is matched to *one or more* females." Here he refers to *Bosman's "Description of the coast of Guinea,"* "who likewise," says

to weigh the tub, both with and without the fish; when, to the confusion of all their reasonings, the matter ended as the reader may conceive.

the Doctor, “ expressly declares, that the
 “ number of women *much* exceeds that of
 “ the men.”—“ When a *polygamous* nation
 “ lives in the neighbourhood of *monogamous*
 “ nations, there is always a probability that
 “ the women necessary for so many men
 “ who have *more* than one wife, are obtained
 “ by stealth, force, or by commerce from the
 “ neighbouring nations ; but in *Africa*, all
 “ the nations are *polygamous* ; every man is
 “ *married*, and has *more* than *one* wife. He
 “ cannot procure these wives from the neigh-
 “ bouring tribes where the same custom pre-
 “ vails : it is therefore, in my opinion, a
 “ clear and settled point, that the women
 “ born among these nations must be more
 “ numerous than the males.

“ Though the colonists at the *Cape of*
 “ *Good Hope* are *monogamous*, I observed, in
 “ the various families of the town and coun-
 “ try, the number of * females to prevail.”
 —“ It has been observed † in *Sweden*, more
 “ females

* *Kempfer*, on numbering the people of *Meaco*, in the kingdom of *Japan*, found the *females* to exceed the *males* in the following proportion :

| | |
|----------|---------|
| Females, | 223,573 |
| Males, | 182,072 |

41,501 more *females* than *males*.

Spirit of Laws, vol. i. p. 373.

† How far this observation may hold good in this kingdom I know not—but, being lately on an occasional visit to the *vicar* of a country village, I had the curiosity to look into the parish register of births ; I took ten years in the latter part of the last century, *viz.* from 1670 to
 1679,

“ females than males have been born during
 “ the latter part of this century—it is reported
 “ in the kingdom of *Bantam*, even *ten* wo-
 “ men are born to *one* man;” and refers to
 “ Lord *Kaines’s* Hist. of Man, vol. i.
 “ p. 176.” *Montesquieu*, Spirit of Laws—
 Eng. Transf. 4th edition, octavo—vol. i.
 p. 374. mentions this—“ I confess,” says he,
 “ if what history tells us be true, that at
 “ *Bantam* there are *ten* women to *one* man,
 “ this must be a case peculiarly favourable to
 “ *polygamy*.”

From all this it appears to me, that, unless we can find that God delivered to *Moses* as many different laws to govern the actions of His reasonable creatures, as there are different parts of the globe inhabited by them, so as that there is one law for the inhabitants of *Asia* and *Africa*, and another for those of *Europe*, this sort of arguments, drawn from the outward appearances of things in different parts of the world, proves nothing on either side of the question, but the exceeding ignorance of mankind as touching the acts and dispensations of that INFINITELY WISE BEING, whose *judgments are unsearchable, and His ways past finding out!* Rom. xi. 33.

The best and fairest, and indeed the only way to get at the truth, on this as on every

1679, inclusive, and there appeared to have been born in that space 19 more *males* than *females*.

In the space between 1770 to 1779, inclusive, the number of *females* born exceeded that of the *males* by 27.
 other

other occasion where religion is concerned, is to lay aside *prejudice*, from whatever quarter it may be derived, and to let the *Bible* speak for itself. Then we shall see that *polygamy*, notwithstanding the *seventh* commandment, was allowed by God *Himself*, who, however others might mistake it, must infallibly know His own *mind*, be perfectly acquainted with His own will, and thoroughly understand His own *law*. If He did not intend to allow *polygamy*, but to prevent or condemn it, either by the *seventh* commandment, or by some other law, how is it possible that He should make laws for its *regulation*, any more than He should make laws for the *regulation* of *adultery*, *theft*, or *murder*? How is it conceivable that He should give the least countenance to it, or so express His approbation of it, as even to *work miracles* in support of it? For the making a woman *fruitful* who was naturally *barren*, must have been the effect of * supernatural power.—He *blest*, and in a distinguished manner *owned* the issue—and declared it legitimate to all intents and purposes. If this be not *allowance*, what is? As to the *first*, namely, his making laws for the *regulation* of *polygamy*, let us consider what is written, *Exod. xxi. 10. If he (i. e. the husband) take him another wife* (not—in so doing he sins against the *seventh* commandment, recorded

* Ps. cxiii, 9. *He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children.*

in the preceding chapter—but) *her food, her raiment* (i. e. of the first wife) *and her duty of marriage, he shall not diminish*—לא יגרע—he shall not *subtract or withhold*, ἐκ ἀποσπῆσει, LXX. Compare 1 Cor. vii. 5. Here God positively forbids a *neglect*, much more the *divorcing or putting away the first wife*, but charges no *sin* on taking the *second*.

2dly. When *Jacob* married *Rachel* she was *barren*, and so continued for many years ; but God did not leave this as a punishment upon her for marrying a man who had *another wife*. It is said, *Gen. xxx. 22.* that God *remembered Rachel, and God hearkened unto her—and opened her womb—and she conceived and bare a son—and said, God hath taken away my reproach.* Surely this passage of scripture ought to afford a complete answer to those who bring the words of the marriage-bond, as cited by CHRIST, *Matth. xix. They twain shall be one flesh*, to prove *polygamy* sinful ; and should lead us to construe them, as by this instance, and many others, the LAWGIVER Himself appears to have done ; that is to say, where a woman, not *betrothed to another man*, unites herself in *personal knowledge* with the man of her choice, let that man's *situation* be what it may—they *twain shall be one flesh*. How otherwise do we find such a woman as *Rachel*, united to *Jacob*, who had a wife then living, praying to God for a blessing on her intercourse with *Jacob*, and God *hearkening unto her, opening her womb, removing her barrenness*, and thus, by miracle, *taking away her reproach?*

reproach? We also find the offspring legitimate, and inheritors of the land of *Canaan*; a plain proof that *Joseph* and *Benjamin* were no *bastards*, or born out of lawful marriage. See a like palpable instance of God's miraculous blessing on *polygamy* in the case of *Hannah*, 1 *Sam.* i. and ii.—These instances serve also to prove, that, in God's account, the *second* marriage is just as valid as the *first*, and as obligatory, and that our making it *less so*, is contradictory to the divine wisdom.

3dly. God blessed and owned the issue. How eminently this was the case with regard to *Joseph*, see *Gen.* xlix. 22—26; to *Samuel*, see 1 *Sam.* iii. 19. It was expressly commanded, that a *bastard*, or son of a woman who was with child by * *whoredom*, should not enter into the congregation of the LORD, even to his tenth generation. *Deut.* xxiii. 2. But we find *Samuel*, the offspring of † *polygamy*, ministering to the LORD in the tabernacle at *Shiloh*, even in his very childhood, cloathed with a linen ephod before *ELI* the priest. See this whole history, 1 *Sam.* i. and ii. Who then can doubt of *Samuel's* legitimacy, consequently of God's allowance of, and blessing on *polygamy*? If such second marriage was in God's account null and void, as a sin against the original law of marriage, the seventh commandment, or any other law of God, no mark of legitimacy could have been found on

* ἐκ πορνείας. LXX.

† See Appendix, N^o 1. vol. ii.

the issue ; for a *null* and *void* marriage is tantamount to *no* marriage at all ; and if no marriage, no legitimacy of the issue can possibly be. Instead of such a blessing as *Hannah* obtained, we should have found her and her husband *Elkanah* charged with *adultery*, dragged forth and *stoned to death* ; for so was *adultery* to be punished. All this furnishes us with a conclusive proof, that the having more than *one wife* with which a man cohabited, was not *adultery* in the sight of God ; or, in other words, that it never was reckoned by Him any sin against the *seventh* commandment, the *original marriage-institution*, or any other law whatsoever.

4thly. But there is a passage (Deut. xxi. 15.) which is express * to the point, and amounts to a demonstration of God's allowance of *polygamy*. *If there be to a man שתי נשים—TWO WIVES—*(Compare Gen. iv. 19. 1 Sam. i. 2. xxx. 5.)—the ONE BELOVED, and the ONE HATED, and they have borne him children, both the BELOVED and the HATED—and if the first-born be to the HATED, then it shall be, when he maketh his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved first-born before the son of the hated, which is indeed the first-born, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath ; for he is the beginning of his strength, and the right of the first-born is his.

* “ Herein is a law, tacitly implied at least, for a man “ to have two wives.” Ant. Univ. Hist. vol. iii. p. 141.

On the footing of this law, the marriage of *both* women is equally *lawful*, God calls them both *wives* (for so the word נשים must be rendered in this place, as the context shews plainly) and He can't be mistaken, if He *calls them so* they certainly *were so*. If the *second* wife bore the first son, that son was to inherit before a son born afterwards of the * *first* wife. Here the issue is expressly deemed *legitimate*, and inheritable to the *double portion of the first-born*; which could not be, if the *second* marriage were not deemed as lawful and valid as the *first*.

The *wisdom of this world*, as at present constituted, would say—the man was an *adulterer*—the *second* wife an *adulteress*—our law would make the man a *felon*—our *ecclesiastical* courts would pronounce the *second* marriage *null and void*—the issue would be *bastardized*—and our *devout* people would lift up their hands and eyes, and deem the whole a monstrous piece of wickedness! Which view of the matter is most agreeable to the *mind and will* of God, must be left to the *judicious* reader to determine.

Dean *Delaney*, who cannot venture to deny absolutely that this text relates to *polygamy*—yet, in a note, endeavours to get rid of its evidence, by saying, that “this one expression—*her's that was hated*—see our translation—makes this law appear rather to be un-

* This could not happen where there were *two wives* in *succession*.

“derstood of the children of two *successive* “wives.”—But the *Hebrew* runs thus—והיה הבן הבכור לשנייה—*and the first-born son be to the hated*—so that the stress laid on the words of our translation, *her's that was hated*, is good for nothing. See *Reflections on Polygamy*, p. 56.

The learned *Dr. Rutherford* has also taken no small pains, to get rid of the conclusive evidence of this text in favour of the divine allowance of *polygamy*. That learned professor, in his lectures which he read at *Cambridge*, on *Grotius de Jure*, found this *text*, in the plain and obvious meaning of the *Hebrew*, by no means conformable to the position which he had laid down, that *polygamy* was contrary to the *law of nature*; he therefore is for supposing the *two wives* to have been in *succession*, and that the *first-born* was the son of the *first wife*. See *Institutes of Natural Law*, b. i. c. 15.

But it is very extraordinary, if this were the case, that it should not be so expressed. This is a point of too much consequence, to be established on words, which do not carry that meaning, and no other, on the face of them: so far from it, the only terms used in the description of the *women* are—“*The one* “*beloved—and the one hated*,”—who can say *which* was *which*?—consequently, presume to determine, of *which wife* the *first-born* was, in point of time?

Dr. Rutherford, as well as *Dr. Delaney*, in his treatment of all *scriptures* which oppose his *law of nature* scheme, puts one in mind of *Kolben's* account of the *Rhinoceros*—

“ This creature, in order to get at his prey,
 “ marches towards it in a *right line*, tearing
 “ his way very furiously through all oppo-
 “ sition of trees and bushes. When he is
 “ upon the march, he is heard at a great dis-
 “ tance, forcing his way through thick bushes,
 “ and snapping of trees.”

As for *Grotius* and *Puffendorf*, they both allow that the *Jewish* law permitted *polygamy*, as they both declare ; and both mention this text as one proof of it. See *Grot. de Jure*, lib. ii. c. 5. § 9. Marg. *Puffend.* lib. vi. c. 1. § 16.—The like may be said of the great *Mr. Selden*, *Bishop Patrick*, and every other learned *commentator*, who had not a very *interesting reason* for imitating *Peter Kolben's Rhinoceros* above-mentioned.

One particular occasion of this law seems to have been, what had happened in the case of *Leah* and *Rachel*, *Jacob's* שתי נשים—*two wives—the one beloved and the one hated*.—See *Gen.* xxix. 30, 31. *Reuben* was the *first-born* of *Leah*—*Joseph* of *Rachel*. *Jacob* disinherited the son of the *hated*, and gave the *right of the first-born* to the son of the *beloved*—but this was not a mere act of *caprice*, and undue *preference*, against the law of inheritance, upon account of *Jacob's* partiality to *Rachel*; but an act of *justice*, on account of *Reuben's* crime, who had gone up to *his father's couch*, and defiled his *concubine Bilhah*.—He therefore disinherited him, as a punishment, and the *birth-right* thus became *Joseph's*, who
 was

was the *first-born* of *Jacob* by *Rachel*. See 1 Chron. v. 1, 2.

As this might have been made a precedent among the *polygamous Jews*, and what had been an act of *justice* in *Jacob*, made use of to justify an indulgence of undue partiality for one wife before another, to the *disinheritance* of the *first-born*, and to the overturning the sacred rights he was invested with, as a *type* or *figure* of *Him that was to come*—who, as the great *antitype*, is styled, “the *first-born* of every creature.” Col. i. 15.—therefore this law seems to have been made, and stands as an irrefragable proof of the lawfulness of *polygamy*; because it stands as a proof, not only of the *allowed* practice of it, but of the *legitimacy* of the *issue* in the sight of God; which is evinced to demonstration in the above case of *Joseph*, who could not have inherited the right of the *first-born*, on any other principle.

Simeon was the next son of *Leah*, but could not take the inheritance, not being the *first-born* of his mother—but *Joseph* was, and therefore, as the only *legitimate heir*, took the birth-right, on the *disinheritance* of *Reuben* the first-born of *Leah*.

But farther. To say that *polygamy* is sinful (for if it ever *was* it certainly *is*, and if ever it *was not* it certainly *is not*, unless some positive law hath made an alteration, or unless good and evil change their nature by length of time, like the fashion of our cloaths) is to

make God the *author of sin*; for * not to forbid that which is evil, but even to countenance and promote it, and this uniformly for ages together, is being so far the *author* of it, and accessory to it in the highest degree.—And shall we dare to *say*, or even to *think*, that this is chargeable on HIM who is of *purer eyes than to behold evil, and who cannot look on iniquity*? Hab. i. 13. God forbid!

When HE is upbraiding DAVID, by the prophet *Nathan*, for his ingratitude towards His *Almighty benefactor*, (2 Sam. xii.) He does it in the following terms: ver. 8. I GAVE ‡ THEE *thy master's house*, and thy
MASTER'S

* *Puffendorf*, b. vi. c. 1. § 16. observes, that the *Mosaic* law was so far from forbidding this custom, that “it seems in several places to suppose it;” and refers to Deut. xxi. 15. xvii. 16, 17. and 2 Sam. xii. 8.

‡ When *Esau* met *Jacob* with his wives and children, he asked—*who are those with thee?* and *Jacob* said—*The children which GOD hath GRACIOUSLY GIVEN thy servant.* Gen. xxxiii. 5. Now, can we suppose that GOD's *gracious gifts* are peculiarly bestowed on acts of rebellion against His positive laws? Yet we must either suppose this, or that *Jacob's polygamy* was no transgression of the law.—See Gen. xxx. 16, 17, 18, another remarkable instance of GOD's special blessing on *polygamy*.

The mention of *Esau* reminds me of a remarkable part of his history. He took *two wives*, both *Hittites*, idolatresses—*which were a grief of mind unto Isaac, and to Rebekah.* Gen. xxvi. 34, 35. But whence arose this grief of mind in *Esau's* parents? Not on account of his *polygamy*, but because he had married *heathen women*, as is clear from xxvii. 46: therefore *Jacob* is sent to *Padan-Aram*, that he might not take a *wife* of the *daughters of Canaan*, but of his *mother's family*; and when *Esau* saw that the *daughters of Canaan* pleased not *Isaac* his father, he
went

MASTER'S WIVES INTO THY BOSOM, *and I gave thee the house of ISRAEL and JUDAH, and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given thee such and such things.*

Can we suppose GOD giving *more wives than one* into DAVID'S bosom, who already had *more than one*, if it was *sin* in DAVID to take them? Can we imagine that GOD should thus transgress (as it were) His own commandment in *one* instance, and yet so severely reprove and chastise DAVID for breaking it in another? Is it not rather plain, from the whole transaction, that DAVID committed

went and took a wife of the daughters of Ishmael, unto the wives which he had—but we hear of no lamentation of Isaac and Rebekah, over this fresh act of polygamy. As for Jacob, we read of his return out of Syria with no less than four wives—that when he came to Mahanaim, and heard of Esau's approach, he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two women-servants (called also his wives—See Gen. xxx. 4, 9. and his eleven sons, and passed over the brook Jabbok. Gen. xxxii. 22. And Jacob was left alone, and there wrestled a man with him, &c. This man is called אלהים ver. 30. GOD; in Hos. xii. 4. מלאך an angel; and ver. 5. the Lord God of Hosts—which, all put together, shews us, that it was not a mere man, nor created angel, but מלאך יהוה the angel JEHOVAH—the messenger of the covenant, Mal. iii. 1. who appeared often in an human form under the Old Testament, in token of His future incarnation under the New Testament, even the man, the GOD-man CHRIST JESUS—He who is represented by commentators as ranking polygamy with adultery, Matt. xix. 9. But what was his conduct towards Jacob?—Doth He reprove Him for the sin of polygamy, in which he was living? No—He said, Thy name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with GOD and with men, and hast prevailed—and he BLESSED him there. Comp. Deut. xxvii. 26. and Gal. iii. 10.

mortal sin in taking another *living* man's wife, but none in taking the widows of the *deceased* SAUL? that therefore, though the law of GOD condemned the *first*, yet it did not condemn the *second*?

This passage of 2 *Sam.* xii. 8. is so conclusive a proof of GOD's allowance of *polygamy*, that writers on the other side of the question have not been able to get rid of it, but by a downright corruption of the text. Instead of the plain, obvious, and literal meaning of the word *קִנְיָה*—which signifies the “*breast*” or *bosom*, from the *throat* to the *pit of the stomach*,” have construed it into *power*, and would tell us that “GOD gave SAUL's wives into DAVID's *power*, as a *sovereign*, not into his *bosom* as an *husband*.”

“Take this expression in its strongest and most strict sense” (says the late reverend and learned * *Dean Delaney*, in a book called “*Reflections on Polygamy*,” printed at London, 1737, under the name of *Phileleutherus Dubliniensis*) “as where *Sarai* tells *Abram* that she had given her maid into his *bosom*, (Gen. xvi. 5.) what more can be meant by it, than that she gave her into his *power*?” We have but to look at the whole context of

* This *Reverend* gentleman is so candid as to tell us, —“that he has ventured to differ from all the commentators he ever met with, in the sense of *every text relating to this point*,”—i. e. of *David's polygamy*.—So that, by his own confession, he stands *alone*, in his interpretation of *every text* upon the subject. See *Reflections on Polygamy*, p. 3.

that passage, and this learned man's question receives a full and explicit answer, and his whole argument an absolute refutation. Gen. xvi. 1. &c. Now SARAI, ABRAM's wife, bare him no children, and she had an handmaid, an ÆGYPTIAN, whose name was HAGAR; and SARAI said unto ABRAM, Behold now the LORD hath restrained me from bearing, I pray thee GO † IN UNTO MY MAID, it may be that I may OBTAIN CHILDREN BY HER. And ABRAM hearkened unto the voice of SARAI: and SARAI, ABRAM's wife, took HAGAR her maid, the Ægyptian, and gave her to ABRAM to be HIS WIFE (לְאִשָּׁה) and HE WENT IN UNTO HAGAR, and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes: and SARAI said unto ABRAM, My wrong be upon thee; I HAVE GIVEN MY MAID INTO THY BOSOM, and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes; the LORD judge between me

† The sequel of this chapter seems to afford, to every candid mind, a very conclusive proof, that this proposal of polygamy to Abram by his wife Sarai, was not sinful, neither Abram's complying with it in the least displeasing to GOD; for on Hagar's departure from Sarai, on account of hard usage, ver. 6. the angel of the LORD recommends it to her to return, and promises to multiply her seed exceedingly, that it should not be numbered for multitude—tells her she should bear a son—בן—which promise was fulfilled, ver. 15. Now, for all this to happen, in support of, and as a blessing upon, a polygamous marriage, if such marriages were sinful, and of course abominable in the eyes of GOD, is, I freely own, past every notion which I have conceived of the scripture-character of the holy GOD of Israel. See Gen. xvii. 20.

and thee. This scripture is too plain to need any comment. I will therefore, after observing that ק"ן no more signifies *power*, than it signifies an *horse*, only add, that if SAUL's *wives* had not been given into DAVID's *bosom*, in the plain and * usual sense of that expression, the circumstance itself could not have afforded that striking aggravation, so beautifully intimated in *Nathan's* parable, of the *rich man's* sparing to take of his own *flock*, and his own *herd*, to dress for the way-faring man that was come unto him, but taking the poor man's lamb, &c.

The learned *Dean*, as well as some other commentators on this famous passage, go still farther, and tell us, DAVID could not enjoy these widows of SAUL as *wives*, because in so doing he would have committed *incest*, they being *mothers-in-law* to MICHAL, SAUL's daughter, who was DAVID's wife. But where is such an union forbidden? I have carefully examined the degrees of *affinity* and *consanguinity* wherein marriage is forbidden, and do find a man must not marry his *own mother-in-law*, (Lev. xviii. 8.) but as to his *wife's mother-in-law*, there is not a trace of such an impediment. As for MICHAL's *own mother*, she, if living, must be put out of the question. See Lev. xviii. 17.

These things being considered, the observations of such commentators evaporate into

* Deut. xiii. 6. אשת חיקך—*uxor sinus tui*. Mont.—*The wife of thy bosom.*

just what NATHAN's parable and remonstrance must do, supposing such criticisms to be true; that is to say, into—nothing at all. DAVID's ingratitude to God, and to his * WORTHY URIAH—were not so marked by NATHAN, because DAVID had a number of women whom he could *not enjoy*; but because he might have *enjoyed* them whenever he pleased: therefore his taking URIAH's *wife* was the more inexcusable, and his rebellious ingratitude against God, who gave him so many women *into his bosom*, the more aggravated.

These truths have not failed universally in their influence, but have forced themselves into the consciences of some; who, not being able to resist their conviction, have confessed that “*Polygamy was allowed of God to the Jews, but yet it is † forbidden to Christians*”—which is just as true as if it was said, that “the people under the Old Testament were *men and women*, but *Christians ‡* are not; for to suppose that the
human

* 2 Sam. xxiii. 39.

† *Polygamy* is prohibited among *Christians*, but was allowed, by *Divine appointment*, among the *Jews*. Chambers, Tit. *Polygamy*.

‡ Or to say with *some of the* antient fathers, who were *wiser* than the scriptures, that the *crescite & multiplicamini* of the Old Testament has nothing to do with *Christians* under the New Testament—Quia hodie, repleto mundo, non tam necessarium quam olim; and again—hoc dictum pertinere ad tempora ante *Christum*, non ad nos qui alio vivimus ævo—mundum jam non desiderare illud *crescite & multiplicamini*. “The com-
I 4. “mand

human species is changed, is not more absurd, than to suppose a change either of the *original* design of God in the institution of marriage, or of the sense and meaning of the *seventh* commandment, as forbidding or condemning that *now*, which was not forbidden or condemned, either by the one or the other, for so many ages *before*. As for the positive law of the *seventh* commandment, it is attended with such pains and penalties in the breach of it, that it is impossible but that some instance of God's disapprobation of *polygamy* must have been met with, had that been within the meaning of it; otherwise the absurdity must follow, of supposing a suspension of this law for 1500 years after it was ordained of God, delivered to *Moses*, and by him to the people at *Mount Sinai*—and all this for the indulgence of *mortal sin* in *one* sex, while it was punished with death in the other.

In the first place, I would observe in general, that *polygamy*, in its proper sense, as practised under the Old Testament by the people of God; that is, the taking *two wives together at once*, or *one to another*, and *cobabiting with both*, is not so much as * men-

“ mand—*Be fruitful and multiply, &c.* is not necessary,
 “ as once it was, because the world is filled with peo-
 “ ple.—That belonged to the times before CHRIST,
 “ not to us who live in another age—the world now
 “ wants not that—*Increase and multiply.*”

* Unless incidentally, 1 Tim. iii. 2. 1 Tit. i. 6. where nothing is said, either good or bad, as to the matter itself in general,

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tioned any where, that I can find, from the *first* chapter of *Saint Matthew* to the *last* of the *Revelation of Saint John*, inclusive: therefore it cannot be said to be * *condemned*. The famous passage in *Matt. xix.* which has been already considered, and will be more fully hereafter, certainly relates to † *divorce*, and, properly speaking, not to *polygamy*; for this, simply considered, does not come in question. The people there, so far from intending *polygamy*, meant nothing less, for they meant to have but *one wife at a time*; else why were they for *divorcing one*, in order to take ‡ *another*? Their sin was this, not the *taking* and *cohabiting* with *more than one* at a time. They imagined themselves *totally free* from the *first*, before they married the *second*.

The New Testament was not to introduce a *new law* concerning this, nor any thing else. Nothing is to be found there which was not in the Old Testament, only as to the *manner*; the *matter* is one and the same. Otherwise, how could *Paul* derive any strength to his argument, *Gal. iii. 10.* by citing the sanction

* Judge *Blackstone* says, very gravely—*Comm. vol. i. p. 436.*—“ *Polygamy* is condemned by the law of the “ *New Testament.*”

† So our *translators* undoubtedly thought; for in the summary of the contents printed at the head of the *chapter*, they only say—“ *CHRIST* answereth the Pharisees concerning *divorcement.*” ver. 3—10. So *Mark x. 2.* “ *Touching divorcement.*”

‡ Here the word *ἄλλην*, *Matt. xix. 9.* is supposed to signify *another* (i. e. *any other woman*) according to our translation. But that this may not be the sense of it, see after.

of the *old law*, to prove the necessity of *salvation by grace*? If the law be in a single instance altered, or changed in one single point, how can it be said by an inspired *apostle* of CHRIST—*Cursed is every one that continueth not in ALL THINGS which are written in the book of the law to do them?*—which, as it never had, so it never can have but one sense and meaning; and our LORD shews, that it not only condemned the *act*, but the very *thought* of *adultery*. Did it only begin to do this, when CHRIST said, *Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart**? Matt. v. 28. (but then this must mean such a woman † as

adultery

* *Per γυναῖκα autem intelligitur uxor alterius.* “By the word *γυναῖκα*—*woman*—the wife of another is understood. 2 Sam. xi. 2, 3, 4. Job xxxi. 1, 7. Prov. vi. 27. Eccles ix. 7, 8, 9. xxvi. 9. Susan. viii. 9, 32.” See Wetst. on Matt. v. 28.

† The word *γυνή*—like the Hebrew *אשה*—is certainly a general term, and signifies *a woman*, as distinguished from a man; and in this sense it is used Matt. xiv. 21. Acts v. 14. & al. freq.

But this cannot be the sense of it here; for if it be sinful to *look* with *desire* on any *woman* whatsoever, then it would be sinful for a man to *desire* his own wife, to whom he is actually married, or a virgin to whom he is contracted; and this would lead us into all the absurdities of the antient *misogamists*, who held *marriage itself* to be *sinful*.

In this place, therefore, it certainly means a *woman* considered as *related to a man*; and that, whether *betrothed* or *espoused* only (See Matt. i. 20, 24. Luke ii. 5.) or that *hath cohabited* with her husband, (Luke i. 5, 13, 18.) for with no other can *adultery* be committed; and it is very evident that *our Saviour's* discourse is on that subject; as forbidden and condemned by the *seventh commandment*, which He is explaining.

adultery could be committed with, supposing the *thought* brought forth into *act*). And does not the Old Testament say the same thing?

What

Γύνη in the New Testament, like נשׂא also in the Old Testament, is the term made use of to denote a *married woman*—when *others* are designed, we meet with κορυσσιον, a damsel, Fr. *demoiselle*—παρθένος, a *virgin*—χήρα, a *widow*—but I believe it would be difficult to find a single passage in the New Testament, where γυνή is used necessarily to denote an *unmarried woman*. μεμέρισαι ἡ γυνή καὶ ἡ παρθένος, 1 Cor. vii. 34. Afterwards the παρθένος is called ἀγαμος—the γυνή, γαμψασα.

For want of such distinction, some *commentators*, by letting their *own* imaginations loose, have filled those of many *readers* with matter of sore distress and bondage of conscience, as if the *desire* after any *female* whatsoever, came within what they call the *spiritual* import of the *seventh* commandment.

I once knew a gentleman, who often assured me, that he never approached *his own wife*, without finding a secret uneasiness in his mind, lest he was doing wrong. He was a great admirer of what are called *spiritual expositors*. These are, too often, a species of *commentators*, who, neglecting the scriptural sense and meaning of the *original*, wander into every conceit which a warm, or perhaps a wild imagination may suggest, from the sound of words in a translation. Some instances of this have been given in this work, and as many more might be given, as would furnish ample materials for a work by itself.

N. B. Let every man be sure he understands the *original letter*—before he *presumes* to descant upon the *spirit* of it; or he will bewilder himself and his readers; and what is worse, be setting forth many things as the *word* of God, which are not so.

Such people there always were.—Among the *heathen*—*Democritus oculos sibi eruit, quòd mulieres sine concupiscentia aspicere non possit. Sed nihil aliud fecit, quam quod fatuitatem suam urbi manifestam fecit.* Tertull. in Apologet.—
“*Democritus plucked out his eyes, because he could not behold women without concupiscence. But he did nothing else than expose his folly to the city.*”—

Among

What else is the meaning of the *tenth* commandment, which says, *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife?* or of Prov. xxiv. 9.

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Among the *Jews*, we read of a sect of *Pharisees*, who were called *Talpæ* or *Moles*, because they walked about with their eyes shut or blindfolded, lest they should behold a woman; and, says my author—*sæpe in muros impeerint & sanguis profusus fuerit*—"They often got bloody noses " by running against walls." See Christoph. Gerson, in Talmud. p. 24.

We are told of a *Jesuit*, called *Alphonsus Rodicius*, who, though he served at the mass 44 years, and had given absolution to thousands, had never beheld the face of a woman in all that time. Geneal. Mar. 31 Oct. p. 577.

Another was so *pious*, and so avoided the sight of all women, that he would not even see his *own mother*. Ib.—To what does this amount?—A delusion of the Devil—an arraignment of the wisdom and holiness of the CREATOR in our formation, by condemning as evil, those appetites, which He hath implanted in our nature, for the purpose of incitement to marriage, and, of course, to the continuance of the human species. To avoid such errors, one safe rule may be laid down, viz. That no *desire* is, or can be *unlawful*, but where the object of it is *unlawful* for us to possess. Let us keep to this, and then we shall not be whittling away the strong, noble, manly sense of scripture, into the ridiculous whims and fancies of visionaries and enthusiasts.

Notwithstanding the length of this note, I cannot help taking notice of a text, which is supposed to be the ground of the *Talpæan* austerity above-mentioned, and which is as likely to be abused to the purposes of *self-righteousness*, as that of Matt. v 28. It is that of *Job* xxxi. 1. *I made a covenant with mine eyes, why then should I think upon a maid?* *Job* is asserting his integrity with respect to many circumstances of his life and conversation; and among the rest, with regard to fleshly incontinence; and this chapter begins with—*I have made a covenant with mine eyes.*—וְמָה אֶתְבוֹנֶן עַל בְּתוּלָה—*Et quid considerabo in virgine.* Mont. Our translation is near enough the original, to give us the sense of it; however, that *sense* must be interpreted according to the analogy of the *divine law*, and not according to the mere *sound* of the

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The thought of foolishness is sin? The word זמַת which we translate *the thought*, signifies

the words; for *Job* (ver. 2, 3.) shews us, that he means to express a very grievous offence, such as excludes from *all portion of God*, and *inheritance in the kingdom of heaven* (Comp. 1 Cor. vi. 9.) and which bringeth *destruction on workers of such iniquity*. This is sufficient to make it impossible that *Job* can speak the truth, if nothing more is meant than is literally expressed. In the first place, *Job* had made no such *covenant*, &c. *as not to think on a maid*, for he had married one. Secondly, this can be no sin, simply considered in itself; for if so, men must plunge into sin, or there must be an end of the world; which but ill agrees with—*INCREASE and multiply*, &c.

Some have therefore construed this to mean, that *Job* was content with *one wife*, and verged not towards *concubinage* or *polygamy*.—Neither of these were forbidden or condemned by the *law*, but, as has been shewn at large, practised openly by the greatest *saints*, and allowed and blessed of *God*; therefore cannot answer to ver. 2, 3.

For which reasons this text is very difficult to interpret agreeably to the analogy of faith, unless the word בתולה—*maid*, or *virgin*—be taken here, for what it certainly imports elsewhere, בתולה ארשה—*virgo desponsata*—a *betrothed* or *espoused virgin*, who still was called בתולה. See Joel i. 8. and perhaps Jer. ii. 32. Comp. Is. lxi. 10. latter part. See Deut. xxii. 23, 24, 25.

That *Job* should not suffer himself to *think on* (*i. e.* so as to *desire*) such a one, is of a piece with what he says, ver. 9, 10, 11, 12; for such a one was, in the eye of the law, *another man's wife*. Deut. xxii. 23, 24. So that *Job* is not to be understood as making *transgression where there is no law*, like the *Talpæ* and the *Jesuit* above-mentioned; but as protesting his innocence with respect to *adultery*, in every sense of the word, as not suffering himself to *look on*, so as to *lust after*, a *virgin betrothed*, much less to commit *actual adultery*, by *defiling his neighbour's wife* ver. 9, 10, 11, 12.

So *omon farchi* construes the passage very liberally indeed, or rather *paraphrases* it thus, viz. “*I made a covenant*, &c. that I would have no knowledge of any “*man's wife*.” See *Chappelowe* on *Job*, vol. i. p. 425.
a wicked

a wicked imagination, *prava aut mala cogitatio*.
 Mont.—an evil thought. The law is spiritual, says Paul, I had not known lust (i. e. known it to be evil) except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. Rom. vii. 7. Therefore, when our Saviour preached on the Mount, He did not make, ordain, or publish any new law, nor did he make the law more spiritual than when published at Mount Sinai; but He set it forth, and vindicated it from the false glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees, who, in their teaching, dwelt on the outward letter only, throwing a veil of obscurity over its spiritual sense and meaning. The seventh commandment was just as spiritual under the Old Testament as under the New. The very thought of adultery in DAVID, was as sinful as it would have been in Saint Paul. How then can it be imagined, that the commandment against adultery meant not as much in the times of Moses and the prophets, as in the days of CHRIST and His Apostles? or, in other words, as much under the Old Testament as under the New? How can it be thought to condemn any thing amongst Christians, which it did not equally condemn amongst the Jews? Whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law (whether Jews or Christians) that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God. Rom. iii. 19. If then the law ever condemned polygamy as adultery, whoredom, or fornication, it certainly does it now; but, as

hath been shewn, it never did condemn it in any one instance, not only *from the beginning*, by any construction put on the *original marriage-institution*, but also for 1500 years together after the giving the law at Mount Sinai; therefore it never has condemned it since: for CHRIST gave no *new* meaning to this or any other of the commandments, but only vindicated and restored the *old*. What *was* murder is *now* murder—what *was* theft is *now* theft—what *was* adultery is *now* adultery—and what *was* none of these, is still none of these.

GOD's *law* is His *will*, and His *will* is His *law*; a change of *one* must infer a change in the *other*, and either of these a change in HIMSELF: an idea which is wholly irreconcilable with the *scripture-character* of GOD, *with whom there is no variableness, neither any shadow of turning*. James i. 17.

Men may cobble, and vamp, and alter, and repeal laws, and indeed it must be so, as mischiefs, which escape all human prescience and foresight, must daily arise; but it cannot be so with OMNISCIENCE. *All things are present and open to Him*. Heb. iv. 13. He ordained the propagation of mankind—*He blessed them, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth*. Gen. i. 28. He made the woman, and *brought her to the man*, and said—*A man shall cleave to his wife*, Gen. ii. 22, 24. (by which expression, according to St. Paul's * interpretation, 1 Cor.

* See before, 19, 20, and note.

vi. 15, 16. is meant the act of † copulation or marriage) and they shall be one flesh—thus creating between them so indissoluble a bond, as never to be divided more. Though these words were spoken immediately by ADAM, yet, doubtless, he spake under the influence of the *divine Spirit*, as may appear from CHRIST's manner of applying the words, Matt. xix. 4, 5. and may therefore, as what MOSES and the *prophets* spake under the same holy influence, be styled —“*The word of God.*” The circumscription and regulation of the whole was provided for by fixed, determined, and immutable laws, calculated for all times, places, and ages of the world, wherein He should be pleased to make them known. These laws, on the establishment of the church, on its deliverance out of ÆGYPT, were given to MOSES, and enforced and explained by him, and the subsequent *prophets*, under the immediate command and teaching of GOD; and continue, like the *holy Lawgiver Himself*, one and the same for ever. Who may marry together, and who may not—what is a lawful marriage in GOD's account, and what is not so, was not left to the uncertain or presump-

† This is the literal import of *באשתו ידבק*—*agglutinetur* *erit in uxore sua*. Mont. (See before p. 20. note,) ill expressed by—*shall cleave to his wife.*—The verb *προσκολληθῆναι*, LXX. Matt. xix. 5. and Eph. v. 31.—and the participle *κολλημένος*, 1. Cor. vi. 16.—are in the *passive voice*.—For the Author's idea of the word *marriage*, see before, p. 48. note.

tuous determinations of mankind, but immutably fixed by *written laws* of GOD. To these it is our bounden duty to conform, and to say to all subsequent inventions of men, as well those which forbid marriage entirely, as those who would put *asunder those whom GOD hath joined together*, under pretence of greater purity and holiness, as the angel did to PETER, Acts x. 15. *What GOD hath cleansed, that call thou not common or unclean.*

I have mentioned the law being explained by the *prophets*. These were extraordinary messengers which GOD raised up and sent forth under a special commission; not only to *foretell things to come*, but to *preach* to the people, to hold forth the *law*, to point out their defections from it, and to call them to repentance, under the severest terms of GOD's displeasure, unless they obeyed. Their commission, in these respects, we find recorded, Is. lviii. 1. *Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet: shew my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins.* This commission was to be faithfully executed, at the peril of the *prophet's* own destruction, as appears from the solemn charge given to Ezekiel, chap. iii. 18. *When I say to the wicked, Thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand.*

These *prophets* executed their commission very unfaithfully towards GOD and the people,

as well as most dangerously for themselves, if *polygamy* was a sin against God's law ; for it was the common practice of the * whole nation, from the *prince on the throne* to the *lowest of the people* ; and yet neither ISAIAH, JEREMIAH, nor any one of the *prophets*, bore the least testimony against it. They reproved them sharply and plainly for *defiling their neighbours wives* ; as *Jer.* v. 8 ; xxix. 23.—in which fifth chapter, we not only find the *prophet* bearing testimony against *adultery*, but against *whoredom* and *fornication*, ver. 7. for that they assembled themselves by *troops in the harlots houses*. Not a word against *polygamy*. How is it possible, in any reason, to think that this, if a sin, should never be mentioned as such, by GOD—by † MOSES—or any one of the *prophets* ?

Here I may particularly mention *Elijah* the *Tishbite*, who could with truth say of himself, 1 Kings xix. 10. קנא קנאתי—*zelando zelatus sum*. Mont. Which emphatical reduplication we translate by—I have been VERY JEALOUS for the LORD OF HOSTS. This holy man was fired with zeal for God's law, and was a most faithful and undaunted reprover of sin, even to the very face of king *Ahab*

* *Josephus* calls it *πολιτικόν*—which answers to what we mean by the word *national*.

† *Moses* mentions all the sins of the *nations* of *Canaan*, as warnings to the *Israelites* not to be guilty of them ; but their *polygamy* is no where mentioned or condemned, nor are the *Jews* warned against it. See *Lev.* xviii. 3, 24, &c.

(who at that time reigned in *Israel*, and was doubtless a *polygamist*; by his having *seventy sons*) yet not a word is said about his *polygamy*; which could hardly have been omitted, had it been a sin against either the *primary* law of marriage, or the *seventh* commandment. The same zeal which led *Elijah* to tell *Ahab*, that *he and his father's house had troubled Israel, by forsaking the commandments of the LORD, and following Baalim*, must surely have led him to reprove *Ahab's polygamy*, had that also been a *forsaking the commandments of JEHOVAH*. The scripture, 1 Kings xvi. 31. strongly remarks, as an aggravation of *Ahab's* superlative wickedness, that he married an *idolatress*, contrary to Deut. vii. 3. Had his *polygamy* been contrary to *Exod. xx. 14.* this would hardly have escaped the reproofs of the prophet *Elijah*, who did not forget *Jezabel*, and the *prophets which ate at her table.* 1 Kings xviii. 19.

We may also observe that *Ezekiel*, ch. xxii. sets down very particularly the sins of *lewdness*, which the *Jews* were addicted to in his day, ver. 10, 11. but not a word of *polygamy* is there to be found.

Although it be true, that none of the *prophets before the captivity* mention it as a *sin*, yet did not *MALACHI*, after the *return from the captivity*, speak of it, and in very severe terms *condemn* it? thus closing the canon of the Old Testament with a most awful reprehension of it? Mal. ii. 14, 15.

As this famous passage is taken for granted to be a condemnation of *polygamy* under the Old Testament, let us examine it, and we shall find that it does not even relate to the subject: if it did, it would be very strange, that so material a point should escape *all* the *prophets* that went before him, *Moses* himself not excepted. This single circumstance should make one suspicious of the common interpretation given to this portion of scripture by the general run of *commentators*, who, mistaking the *sound* of the words for the *sense* of the text, have followed one another like sheep, who keep the same track, only because others have gone before them. The words, as they stand in our translation, are these—
 THE LORD *bath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet she is thy companion and the wife of thy covenant. And did not He make one? yet hath He the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That He might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth; for the LORD GOD of ISRAEL saith, that he hateth* PUTTING AWAY.

The *last* words are a key to the rest, and shew, that the instance in which they *dealt treacherously with their wives*, was *putting them away*; and this, in order to take *heathen* women in their room. This is manifest from ver. 11. JUDAH *bath dealt treacherously*, and an abomination is committed in ISRAEL and JERUSALEM; for JUDAH *bath prophaned the holiness*

holiness of the LORD which he loved; and hath married the daughter of a strange god.

EZRA *, who lived about this time, hath recorded the fact at large, and fully explains the matter; *chap. ix. 1. The people of ISRAEL and the priests have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, for they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons, and the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands.*

Ver. 10. *And now, O LORD, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments, which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets, saying, The land which ye go to possess is an unclean land, &c.*

Ver. 12. *Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters to your sons, &c.*

Chap. x. 2. *We have trespassed against our GOD, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land. Now therefore let us make a covenant with our GOD, to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, ver. 3.*

The putting away these heathen women was a duty, and this by the positive law of GOD. For GOD having, as it were, forbidden the *banns* in express words (*Deut. vii. 3.*) their marriages were absolutely null and void *ab initio*; they could contract no valid marriage whatsoever with them, and therefore must put them away. This affords us a strong proof of the lawfulness of polygamy, where the

† See also *Nehemiah xiii. 23—29.*

woman was not excepted against, as by the law above mentioned, or by some other: for if this were otherwise, we should hear of *putting away* all but the *first* in all cases. GOD would not have suffered any marriage which was contrary to the *seventh* commandment, any more than those which were contrary to *Deut. vii. 3.* When we compare EZRA and MALACHI together, we find by the *former*, that the *Jews* took *heathen* women for their wives; and by the *latter*, that they not only did this, but *put away* their *Israelitish* wives for *that very purpose*. This is plainly what *ver. 14.* calls *dealing treacherously* with their wives, their divorcing them for this *unhallowed* purpose. There the *prophet* uses the like arguments against them as he had before used, *ver. 10.* with regard to their *dealing treacherously with their brethren*—Have we not all one father? hath not one GOD created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers? When they put away their *Jewish* wives, and married the *heathen* idolatrous women, they *profaned the covenant of their fathers*; that is, that command of GOD delivered to their fathers, not only in the *original* institution of marriage, which forbade *putting away*, but also that positive law, *Deut. vii. 3.* which forbade marriage with *heathens*. They *dealt treacherously with their brethren*; that is to say, with the *parents* and *relations* of their unjustly-divorced wives, who gave them their *daughters* or *sisters* in marriage, to *abide* with them, not
to

to be *put away*. They *dealt treacherously also with their wives*, in *putting them away*.—Therefore the *prophet* reproveth them, and calls them to repentance by the following considerations, ver. 14, 15 ; which I will endeavour to lay before the *reader* in a paraphrase suitable to the literal and true meaning of the *original* Hebrew, and conformable to the *analogy* of divine revelation, as delivered to us by Moses and the *prophets*. Then it will appear, that these distinguished servants of God were not guilty of concealing, disguising, or dissembling the truth ; nor God Himself capable of suffering His *seventh* commandment, as well as the *original institution of marriage*, to be transgressed, not only with impunity, but *allowance*, uniformly through so many ages, or of leaving His church and people utterly ignorant of His mind and will touching so important a matter, for all that time,

וְלֹא אֶחָד עָשָׂה—*Et ne unus fecit ?* Mont.—*And did not one make ?* Here our commentators, misled by our *translators*, and these by the vulgar error of the *sinfulness of polygamy*, tell us, that “ these words signify God’s making “ but *one woman* at the beginning ; He had the “ *residue of the spirit*, and therefore could “ have made *more women* for ADAM if He “ had pleased.” One misfortune attending so ignorant a comment, is, that the word אֶחָד cannot signify *one woman*, unless, among other changes, *women* were of the *masculine* gender under the Old Testament, though of the *feminine* under the New Tes-

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tament ;

tament; for אֶחָד is certainly of the *masculine* gender—אֶחָת is the *feminine*—See Judges ix. 53.—אִשָּׁה אֶחָת—*mulier una*. Mont. & al freq. This, besides an undue transposition of the words, is, I take it, a conclusive reason for saying they mistake the passage. It is not—*Did not he make One?*—but—*Did not One * make?* like ver. 10. *Have we not all ONE Father? Did not ONE GOD create us? Did not One, or THE ONE, make both you and your Jewish wives? Did He not form both of you—(see Deut. xxxii. 6.) naturally of the same seed of Abraham—spiritually by the same holy dispensation and ordinances?*—At ver. 14. it is said—וְהָיָה חֵבְרֶתְךָ—*she is thy companion,* or associate—וְאִשָּׁת בְּרִיתְךָ—and *a wife, or woman, of thy covenant*—i. e. a partaker with thee in the *covenant* made with *Abraham* and his seed after him. So the prophet Zech. ix. 11. where GOD says to the *daughter of Zion*—As for thee—בְּרִיתְךָ—*In* (or by) *the blood THY COVENANT I have sent forth thy prisoners, &c.* where בְּרִיתְךָ—*thy covenant*—compared with the context in this place of *Malachi*, clearly determines the meaning to be as above, and it stands here as opposed to the *daughter of a strange* GOD, ver. 11.—וְשָׂאָר רוּחַ לּוֹ—*And He bath*

* If the attentive reader will compare the אֶחָד—*one*, in this place, with אֵל אֶחָד—*one GOD*, ver. 10. surely he must see, that the same *Almighty Person* is meant. There he is said to *create*—here to *make*. Comp. Gen. ii. 3. latter part.

“ (or

“ (or hath He not ?) the *remainder of the Spi-*
 “ *rit*—Hath He not the same *power* He ever
 “ had ?—Is His hand shortened at all, so
 “ that He cannot complete your restoration
 “ if He pleases, or punish you still more se-
 “ verely, if you continue disobedient to His
 “ commandments ? *Spirit* is here used for
 “ *power**, mighty, but especially *irresistible*
 “ *power* ; as Ps. cxxxix. 7. Is. lix. 19. Is.
 “ lxiii. 14. Is. xxxiv. 16.—וְמִה הָאֶחָד מִבְּקֶשׁ
 “ And what did THE ONE seek ? זָרַע אֱלֹהִים
 “ —a † seed of GOD—an ‡ holy seed (see Ez-
 “ ra ix. 2. compare ver. 14.) therefore take
 “ heed to your spirit—that is, your temper—af-
 “ fections”—as רָוָח is very often applied, (see
 Numb. xiv. 24. 1 Sam. i. 15.) “ and none of
 “ you deal treacherously against the wife of thy
 “ youth, (whom thou hast married when a

* So the *power* of the *Spirit* is often used for the *Spi-*
rit itself. Comp. Is. xxxii. 15. Luke xxiv. 49. Acts i.
 8. See also Judges xiii. 25 ; xiv. 19 ; xvi. 17, 20.
 Rom. i. 4. with 1 Cor. vi. 14. & al. freq. In an old edi-
 tion of the *Bible*, printed in the year 1615, there are short
 notes added in the margin ; and in the note on the word
Spirit, in this text, it is explained to mean *power and*
virtue.

† Et quid Unus quærit nisi semen DEI. *Vulg.*

‡ This can have nothing to do with *polygamy*, because,
 if it had, we should have hardly found it *allowed* of GOD,
 and practised by his saints ; or, in fact, have found some
 of the most distinguished and blessed men that ever lived,
 the offspring of *polygamous* marriages ; witness holy *Jo-*
seph, and the prophet *Samuel*. Besides all this, we may
 observe, that the *Jews*, who are in this place of *Ezra*
 emphatically styled *the holy seed*, were descended from the
twelve sons of *Jacob*, half of which were born under *po-*
lygamy.

“ virgin)

“ virgin) by *putting her away*, and *taking*
 “ *these idolatresses* ; for I the LORD *hate put-*
 “ *ting away.*” The consideration of the re-
 lation they stood in to JEHOVAH—He their
common Father—they His professing children,
 was one argument against their separating—
 another was, that, as the LORD sought a
godly seed in their offspring, by their being
 devoted to Him in their earliest infancy,
 then brought up in the *nurture and admoni-*
tion of the LORD, this design would be de-
 feated by their taking *idolatrous* women, who,
 instead of devoting the children to JEHO-
 VAH, would be for bringing them up to the
 * *worship* of their *idols*, and an *ungodly seed*
 be the consequence. See *Deut.* vii. 3, 4.
 Lastly, God had forbidden *divorce* from the
 beginning, (see *Gen.* ii. 24.) for He *hateth*
putting away at any rate ; but how much
 more to see His own professing daughters *put*
away, that His own professing sons might
marry the daughters of a strange God ? This
 was indeed *doing an abominable thing which*
God hated. *Jer.* xliv. 4.

This I take to be a clear, consistent view
 of this famous passage, and agrees exactly
 with what EZRA says, chap. ix. 9. &c. and
 chap. x. 2. &c. who did not *rend his mantle*
and garment, and pluck the hair off his head

* We find that these idolatrous women laid a sure
 foundation for this, by bringing up their children in the
 knowledge of the heathen tongues of their several coun-
 tries, so that they could not understand the language of
 God's law. See *Neh.* xiii. 23, 24.

and

and beard, and sit down astonished, because the people did what their fathers ABRAM, JACOB, DAVID, &c. had done without the *least reproof*, and had been constantly, openly, avowedly praised by the holiest of their forefathers, without the least * scruple on their part, or condemnation on God's part—but because they had married *heathen* women, and, as appears by *Mal. ii. 14.* had *dealt treacherously* against the *Jewish lawful* wives, by *putting them away* in order to do it.

As to the notion expressed by *commentators*, in their apparently misconceived ideas of this text of MALACHI—that because GOD created but *one man* and *one woman* at first, therefore he intended that “no man should have more
“ than one wife at a time ever after,” I do humbly conceive, that, if GOD had *meant* so, He would somewhere have *said* so, and not have left it to the wisdom of men to put their † interpretations on what He was pleased to

* When *Joseph* was solicited by *Potiphar's* wife, he answered with abhorrence—*How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against GOD?* Gen. xxxix. 9. latter part.—But when *Abraham's* wife *Sarah* proposed her husband's taking *Hagar* to wife, Gen. xvi. 2, 3. he does it without the least objection. So *Jacob* took *Rachel* after *Leah*, there being then no law against marrying a wife's sister. This, and the many other instances, clearly prove, that the wisest and best of GOD's saints never dreamt of *polygamy's* having any relation to the sin of *adultery*.

† As to putting our construction on any acts of GOD, so as to draw them into *precedents*, unless clearly instructed by Him so to do, it would in many cases be attended

to do ; for *who hath known the mind of the LORD, and who hath been his counsellor?* Rom. xi. 34. Some may argue, that because it was said—“ *A man shall cleave to his wife, not*
“ *wives, therefore it is unlawful for a man*
“ *to have two or more wives in * succession,*

tended with great mischiefs—for instance : Suppose we were to argue for *brothers* and *sisters* intermarrying, because this must have been the case among the immediate children of *Adam* and *Eve*? the creation of only *one man* and *one woman*, would at least be as good an argument for incest, as *against* polygamy. But it can have no weight in either case, because GOD, by a positive law, (Lev. xviii. 9.) prohibited the *first*, and by as positive a law (Deut. xxi. 15—17.) allowed the *second*. It pleased GOD, that the whole *human nature* should reside in one common *fœderal head*, who was to be the common *representative* of all his subsequent naturally-engendered offspring; and by *one woman* taken out of *himself*, to convey that nature which was in him to his own immediate children, and by them to his posterity, to the end of the world. Let any one read *Rom. v.* with attention, and consider in what respects *Adam* was a *figure of Him that was to come* (ver. 14.) and then it will be seen, that no man who ever *was*, or *will be* naturally engendered of the offspring of *Adam*, can have been, or be in the same circumstances and situation that *Adam* was. Wherefore a precedent against *polygamy* is no more to be drawn from him, than against natural generation from *Eve*’s being made out of *one of his ribs*, or from his own being immediately formed out of the *dust of the earth*.

* There was a time in the *Christian church*, when this was looked upon as only “ a more specious and decorous kind of *adultery*,” and reckoned *infamous*.

The *Montanists* affirmed *second marriages* to be as *scandalous* and *sinful* as *fornication*. In the *three first ages* of the *church* “ *second marriages* were reputed *scandalous*, nay they were *condemned* by some persons.” *Dupin*, Eccl. Hist. vol. i. 182. Engl. transl. But more of this hereafter.

“ and

“ and can only have *one* so long as he lives,
 “ because *Adam* had but *one*.” This sort of conceits is like supposing that God forbid the wearing cloth, or silk, or linen, because He *cloathed* our first parents *with skins*. Gen. iii. 21 ; or supposing, like those mad *heretics* of the *second* century, who called themselves *Adamites*, that *Christians* are to meet together stark *naked* without any *shame*, because it is said (Gen. ii. 25.) ADAM and EVE *were naked, and were not ashamed*. If we take upon ourselves to interpret this or any act of God merely by our imaginations, we take upon us what does not belong to us. We are told, Deut. xxix. 29. SECRET THINGS *belong unto the LORD our God, but those things which are REVEALED, to us and our children for ever, that we may do all the words of His law.*

That God might have created 10,000 *men*, and as many *women*, is certain. Why He did not, He hath no where told us, any more than why He created only *one man* and *one* * *woman*. This and all things else are to be resolved

* *Milton* represents *Adam* as saying——

——— O why did GOD,
 Creator wise, that peopled highest heav'n
 With spirits masculine, create at last
 This novelty on earth, this fair defect
 Of Nature, and not fill the world at once
 With men as angels without feminine,
 Or find some other way to generate
 Mankind ?

Par. Lost, B. 10.

We may presume that God made the rest of the animal creation by *pairs*, the *male* and *female*—Comp. Gen. i. 20—25. with Gen. vi. 19. Gen. vii. 2, 3, 9,
 14—16 :

resolved into His *own good pleasure, and the counsel of his own will*. Eph. i. 11. Rev. iv. 11. Our attempting to account for any of His holy acts or dispensations, any farther than the revelation of His word expressly authorizes us, is to be wise *above what is written*, to involve ourselves in endless mazes of error, till—*professing ourselves wise, we become fools*. Rom. i. 22.

GOD's bringing the woman to the man—that solemn denunciation—therefore shall a man leave father and mother, and cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh—form a conclusive argument against wanton and causeless divorce; and are expressly made use of by CHRIST for that purpose in His dispute with the *Pharisees*, Matt. xix. 4, 5; but it is no where, in the whole scripture, made use of as an argument against *polygamy*. There

14—16: therefore, to draw arguments against *polygamy* (which, by the way, the scriptures have no where done) from a similar creation of the human species, would, if pursued to the utmost, prove *too much*, and of course prove *nothing*. So when GOD was about to destroy the earth by the *deluge*, he commanded *Noah* to come into the ark—"Thou and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee," in all eight persons (see 1 Pet. iii. 20) "and of every living thing of all flesh, TWO OF EVERY SORT—they shall be male and female—seven pair of the clean, and two pair of the unclean, the MALE AND HIS FEMALE."—אִישׁ וְאִשְׁתּוֹ—*Virum & uxorem ejus*. Mont. So that in the preservation of the *brutal*, as well as of the *human* species, we read of them in *pairs*—and these *pairs* are described by the same *Hebrew* words, which, in other parts of the scriptures, we render—*a man and his wife*.—For the *exact* words of these abridged passages, see the scriptures above referred to.

were,

were, doubtless, opportunities enough in the *antediluvian*, as well as the *postdiluvian* world, to have given occasion for it, had any * such thing been intended.

The first instance of *polygamy* which is recorded, we find Gen. iv. 19. *And LAMECH took unto him two wives, the name of one was*

* One weighty reason for the creation of only *one man* and *one woman* at first, may perhaps be gathered from Acts xvii. 26. where it is said—*He hath made of ONE BLOOD all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth.* Had more men and women than *Adam* and *Eve* been created at first, this strict affinity of relationship *by blood* could not have existed; but this was wisely and graciously contrived, as a reason for, and cement of, brotherly love—as a means of hiding pride, and boasting of one above another, with respect to their original pedigree; so that none, on this account, should despise or set at nought his brother. This thought is well expressed in that well-known epitaph:

Nobles and heralds, by your leave,
Here lie the bones of *Matthew Prior*,
The son of *Adam* and of *Eve*,—
Let *Bourbon* or *Nassau* go higher!

Although, in this corrupt and mixed state of things, civil government is necessary, therefore outward distinctions of men are necessary; for without these no civil polity could exist; yet, *in that day*, when the *governors* and *governed* shall appear before the *Great Governor of all*, they will be constrained to say, with *Joseph's* brethren, Gen. xlii. 11. *we are all one man's sons*;—and then will know, however little attention they may give to it now, that *GOD* is *no respecter of persons*. See Acts x. 34. If these humbling considerations were improved as they ought, they would furnish us with motives of humility, benevolence, brotherly-kindness, long-suffering, mercy, and charity to each other, beyond all the arguments of the wisest moralists of *Greece* and *Rome*. See Mal. ii. 10.

ADAH, *the other ZILLAH*. Here our commentators think they have found out the *sin* of *polygamy*—"It was one of the degenerate
 "race of Cain," saith one, "that first trans-
 "gressed the law of marriage, that *two only*
 "should be one flesh." These are the words
 of one of the wisest and best (Mr. Henry)
 among our *English* commentators, and serve
 to shew how far men will go to support a
 popular notion, or pre-conceived opinion,
 even to the * *corrupting of the Bible*. There
 are

* See Henry on Gen. iv. 19. When I saw the word ONLY interpolated by Mr. Henry, I really thought it a corruption worthy the church of Rome. In this I find I was not mistaken, for the council of Trent thus dogmatizes—"Adam did pronounce the bond of matrimony to
 "be perpetual, and that ONLY *two persons may be joined*
 "therein; a thing more plainly declared by CHRIST." See Brent. 784.—Now, here is an interpolation of the word ONLY, and a downright lye to justify it—for where does CHRIST more plainly declare, that ONLY *two persons* can be joined together in marriage?

Mr. Henry goes on to tell us, that "Hitherto *one man*
 "had but *one wife* at a time."—(How did he know that? See Le Clerc on Gen. iv. 19. and Thelyph. vol. ii. p. 161. n)—"But Lamech took two—From the begin-
 "ning it was not so"—this he would prove from Mal. ii. 15. which is nothing to the purpose. See above p. 132—139. He then falls into the usual misapplication and perversion of Matt. xix. 8. where the words
 "in the beginning it was not so"—clearly and necessarily refer to the preceding sentence, which mentions nothing but "putting away their wives."

Mr. Henry concludes his annotation on Gen. iv. 19. with two practical inferences:—"1. That those who
 "desert God's church and *commandments*" (which said *commandments* are, on this occasion, the entire *forgery* and *invention* of the commentator) "lay themselves open to
 "all manner of temptation.—2. That when an *ill cus-*
 "tom

are no such words as “*two only*” in the law of marriage referred to — It stands, Gen. ii. 24. *they shall be one flesh*; and, as mentioned by CHRIST, Matt. xix. 5. *οἱ δύο* — *they twain shall be one flesh*. So Mark x. 8. Had the words “*two only*” been there, we should not have read so frequently afterwards of God’s countenancing, or His saints practising *polygamy*, any more than of His countenancing, and *their* practising *adultery*. I must here take notice of the *Evangelist’s* introduction of the words *οἱ δύο* — *they twain*, or *the twain* — which certainly was not done as an *addition* to the original words, or as an *interpolation*, in order to introduce some *new doctrine*, but merely as a sort of *paraphrase* to explain their import, sense, and meaning — that a *man* and *his wife*, though before marriage they were *two* — that is, separate, unconnected, independent of each other, so that they might or might not come together, yet afterwards they are *no more two*, separate, unconnected, independent persons, but as *one flesh*, *εἰς σάρκα μίαν*. — The words *οἱ δύο* — *the twain* — are not to be taken in their *numerical* * *sense*, for if they be, what

“ tom is begun by ill men, sometimes men of better cha-
 “ racters are, through unwariness, drawn in to follow
 “ them: *Jacob, David*, and many others, who were
 “ otherwise good men, were afterwards ensnared in *this*
 “ sin, which *Lamech* had begun.” — N. B. This is called
 an *Exposition* of the scriptures of the Old Testament!

* *Non unitas essentialis, sed unio seu conjunctio mystica
 vel conjugal*is describitur. — Nold. Part. Edit. Tymp.

what follows ver. 6.—*so that they are no more twain*—would not be true; for certainly a man and woman are as much *numerically two after marriage*, as they are *before* it, and therefore cannot be *numerically one*; but in the same sense in which they were spoken of as *two* before, they now become *one*, that is to say, in consideration of law.

The marriage destroys their unconnectedness, distinctness, and independency on each other, so that in all *legal* consideration they are *no more twain, but one flesh*. Therefore the consequence is proved which our blessed LORD meant to prove—it could not be *lawful for a man ἀπολυειν—to divorce his wife for every cause, or for any cause except one*, which, of itself, divided their persons again, and amounted to a total dissolution of the marriage-bond: for to make a man live with an *adulteress*, would be to make him father other people's children, defeat his own rightful heirs, and introduce that confusion into his family, which it was one grand object of the *seventh* commandment to prevent. For want of considering the words *οἱ δύο—they twain, or the twain*—in the *legal* sense above-mentioned, our commentators have jingled them in their fancies, till they have blundered into their *two only—two and no more*: thus interpolating and corrupting the words of the marriage-institution, as it stands recorded

750. “Not an *essential* unity, but an *union* or *conjunction mystical or conjugal* is described.” Matt. xix. 5, 6. Mark x. 8.

Gen. ii. 24. and what is worse still, making our *blessed Saviour* do the same, by representing Him as using the words in their *numerical* sense. This stamps untruth, nay, downright nonsense on what He says, ver. 6; for it is not true that a *man and his wife* are no more (*numerically*) *two*; and to say that persons, who are *numerically two*, are yet *numerically one*, is downright nonsense. As the word *twain* is to be understood in a *legal* sense, so *they shall be one flesh*, cannot be understood in a *literal* sense, as if by a kind of matrimonial *transubstantiation* they became literally *one body* (see 1 Cor. vi. 16); but that they are so in a *legal sense* is very certain; and therefore, as a man cannot separate his *bones* from his *flesh*, nor his *flesh* from his *bones*, without destroying himself, so neither can a man *put away his wife* unjustly (who, in estimation of God's law, *is bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh*) without offending against the holiness, and destroying the positive obligation of the marriage-institution.

Those, who by the legerdemain of this same *numerical* interpretation of the word *twain*, added to the *sound* of the former clause of ver. 9. make CHRIST condemn *polygamy* as *adultery*, represent Him as using the word *זנות*—*adultery*—in an unauthorized unconformity to the *Hebrew* scripture (as our LORD doubtless spake in *Hebrew*); for no where is that word used, to denote a man who had one wife, *taking another to her*, and *cohabiting*

with both (which I take to be the true and genuine notion of *polygamy*) ; nor is it used in *any* other sense, but to denote the *defilement of a married woman*. OUR SAVIOUR, who constantly appealed to the *Hebrew* scriptures for what he delivered to the people, can hardly be supposed to have advanced a doctrine so unsupported by *them* ; and *that* before an audience of those very *Pharisees*, who we are told, Luke xi. 54. *were laying wait for him, seeking to catch something out of His mouth, that they might accuse Him*. Again—by making CHRIST declare *polygamy* to be *adultery*, they charge Him with asserting a falsehood, both in point of *law* and *fact*, by declaring all such *after-taken women* not to be the real *wives* of the men who took them ; for if they were, *adultery* must be out of the question. Let us examine this on the footing of scripture. It is said, 1 Sam. xxv. 42, 43, *ABIGAIL became DAVID's wife*, and *DAVID* also took *AHINOAM* of *JEZREEL*, *and they were also both of them his wives*. So witnesseth the *Holy Ghost*, and this, though ver. 44. tells us, he had at that very time *another wife* living. By saying *they were also both of them his wives* (for that must be the meaning of נשים in this context) it is making each *one flesh* with him, so that he could not *divorce* either ; and if either had gone to another man, she would have been an *adulteress*, and the man who took her would have been an *adulterer*. I say this, taking it for granted that the *Holy Ghost* would not have called them *his wives*, לו לנשים

לנשים—*sibi in uxores*. Mont.—unless they *really* were so. See also 1 Sam. xxvii. 3.

Thus, on the authority of the *Hebrew* scripture, an *after-taken* woman is as much a man's *wife* who takes her, as the *first* is—therefore it is neither true in point of *law* or *fact*, that a man having *one wife*, and taking *another*, committeth *adultery*; for which reason it is * impossible CHRIST should ever say so, and those who make Him say so, wrest His words from their true meaning.—But as this portion of scripture will necessarily fall under farther consideration hereafter, I will now return to the history of LAMECH.

Whether he did right or wrong does not appear, for it is only said—LAMECH *took him two wives*. His being “of the degenerate “race of CAIN” made it not a jot the *worse*, or a tittle the *better*, any more than the same thing done by JACOB made it either the one or the other, because he was “of the blessed “race of SETH.” The invention of *music*, which was afterwards made such considerable use of in the *temple* of GOD—of *agriculture* and the *care of cattle*—of *working in brass* and

* It is very certain that the whole law of *Moses*, even the *ceremonial* part of it, was at this time in all its force and obligation—therefore to represent CHRIST, who came to vindicate its honour, and enforce the respect due to it, as laying down a proposition in direct contrariety to the whole tenor of the *Jewish* law, is to represent Him as uttering a downright falsehood, and this in the face, as it were, of the whole *Jewish* nation, which He so constantly referred to the writings of *Moses*, for the truth of what He said,

iron, were all found out by LAMECH's children; yet I cannot conceive that they are the less innocent in themselves, or less useful to mankind, than if they had been found out by ABRAHAM, ISAAC, and JACOB. We can only say of such observations on scripture, that they are very *silly*; but if the word of GOD is to be corrupted, in order to serve as a foundation for them, they are very *wicked*. See Deut. iv. 2. xii. 32. I only mention Mr. Henry, but I might name others; *one* who goes so far in corrupting the text, that he represents it as the command of GOD, that “two, and no more, should be *one flesh*, Gen. ii. 24.” The words simply are והיו לבשר אחד—*Et erunt in carnem unam*. Καὶ ἔσονται οἱ δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν. Matt. xix. 5. *They twain shall be one flesh*. The words ἔσονται οἱ δύο—*they two shall be*, &c.—relate to the *man* and his *wife*, mentioned in the same verse, and answer to the והיו Gen. ii. 24. which signifies *they shall be*—meaning the איש and אשתו the *man* and his *wife*, Gen. ii. 24. So that though here be a small variation between *they shall be*, and *they twain shall be*, yet it is merely *verbal* in point of quotation; the *sense* is just the same, whether, speaking of a man and woman, we say—*they*, or—*they twain*: but adding the word *only*, or *they two and no more*, is a very material alteration, so material, as to alter the whole sense of the passage, and to make every *polygamist* that ever lived, an offender against the original *institution of marriage*. Rather than fail in this,

even

even the learned *Beza* himself will condescend to talk nonsense. On 1 Cor. vi. 16. where the *apostle* cites our LORD's words—*Two shall be one flesh*—"this *ὁ δυο*," says he, "is not mentioned by *Moses*, but is rightly added, as well in this place as in Matt. xix. 5. and Mark x. 8. because there is only mention made of a man and of one wife, but not of wives; nor is it true that a polygamist is one with each of his several wives, when he is rather divided into as many parts as he has wives." Though this learned man represents a polygamist as *Judges* xix. 29. represents the *Levite's concubine*, whom he divided, together with her bones, into twelve parts, and sent her into all the coasts of ISRAEL, yet the polygamists which we read of in scripture were as entire individuals, in a moral as well as a natural sense, as those who had but one wife; otherwise each woman could not have called the man * *her husband*, 1 Sam. i. 8, 22, 23. nor could each woman be called *his wife*, ver. 2. Now whatever parties, being united, in GOD's account are man and wife, they are also † *one flesh*, therefore

* It is, in our law, commonly said, that each jointenant is seised of the land, which he holdeth jointly, *per my & per tout*—"by the half, or by part, and by the whole." "*Et sic totum tenet, & nihil tenet*—scil.—*totum conjunctim, & nihil seperatim*, says Lord Coke."—"And thus he holdeth the whole, and holdeth nothing—that is to say, the whole jointly, and nothing separately." COKE LITT. 186. a. LITT. § 288.

† This phrase, according to the *Hebrew*, denotes all relationship, whether of affinity by marriage, as Gen.

fore it is *true*, “ that a *polygamist* is *one* with “ each † of his *several* wives”—that is to say, in the *legal* sense above-mentioned ; nor can all the reasonings of men prove them otherwise, ’till they can prove themselves wiser than He is who declares them to be so. And I do verily believe, that if a man had *seduced* any wife of a *polygamist*, and had been arraigned before the judges of *Israel* on that statute, Deut. xxii. 22. *he* must, as well as the *woman*, have been condemned to die, notwithstanding what *Beza* has said, or what all the reasoners in the world could have said on the subject of *polygamy*, in *arrest* of judgment.

But there is a text in the Old Testament, which is looked upon by some to be a direct forbiddance of *polygamy* ; for it stands in the *margin* of our Bibles—*Thou shalt not take one wife to another*. If this be right rendering of the *Hebrew*, then the saints of old time

ii. 24. or *consanguinity*. See Gen. xxix. 14. Judges ix. 2. 2 Sam. v. 1. 1 Chron. xi. 1. 2 Sam. xix. 12, 13. So that the conjuration of *Beza*, and other commentators, who have found out that a man can only be *one flesh* with *one woman*, may also find out that but *one* of his relations can be of *his bone* and of *his flesh*, or be called so with any propriety. In Lev. xviii. 6. a *man’s near of kin* is in the *Hebrew* שֹׁרֵר בִּשְׂרֹ—*remainder of his flesh*. Eng. Marg.—every near relation being, as it were, a *remnant*, or remainder of the same flesh and blood of which we ourselves consist.

† Even as CHRIST, the *husband of the church* (comp. If. liv. 5. with 2 Cor. xi. 2.) is as really *one* with every *several* believer, as with the whole church collectively ; or as the *head* is *one* with *each* and *all* the members of the body. See post.

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sinned against *light, knowledge, and law* * with a witness ! But it is translated in the text—*Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, to vex her, in her life-time.* Lev. xviii. 18. First, I would observe, that the marginal reading—“*one wife to another*”—disunites entirely the 18th verse from the preceding context to which it belongs ; this only treats of marriages which are unlawful with respect to *affinity* and *consanguinity*. The *brother's wife* had there been spoken of, ver. 16 ; here, most naturally, as a necessary part of the prohibition of *incest*, the *wife's sister*. Secondly, This rendering of the text is agreeable to the grammatical sense of the *Hebrew*, which the other is not. This is demonstrably

* *Ipsos quoque Judæos hanc legem de polygamia haud accepisse, perpetua consuetudo plures sibi ex hac gente jungentium uxores ostendit. Non autem videntur tanto impetu per vetitum nefas ruisse, præcipuè legis divinæ cætera studiosissimi, si expresso hujusmodi mandato hac de re cautum fuisset.* Tympius in Nold. p. 30, note r.

“ That the *Jews* themselves did not understand this
 “ law as concerning *polygamy*, their constant practice of
 “ marrying a plurality of wives demonstrates ; for it is
 “ not probable that they should have rushed with such
 “ violence into prohibited wickedness, especially those
 “ who were most observant of the divine law in all other
 “ respects, if cautioned against it by so express a com-
 “ mandment.”

This is certainly very *improbable*, yet not so *improbable*, as that, if *polygamy* be against the original institution of marriage, and, as such, here forbidden by a *positive law*, God should no where appear to disapprove it, or enact any *judicial law* against it, on the side of the man, as on the side of the woman. See Lev. xx. 10. where the *wife* who is defiled, and the *man* who defiles her, are condemned to *capital punishment*.

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shewn in *Tympius's* note on Lev. xviii. 18. in *Noldius*, Heb. Part. אשה p. 30. But as I find the meaning of this important passage better explained by the learned *Bishop Patrick* on the place, than I can express it in any words of my own, I will transcribe the *Bishop's* note as it stands :

“ There are a great many eminent writers,
 “ who, following our marginal translation
 “ (*one wife to another*) imagine that here
 “ *plurality of wives* is expressly forbidden by
 “ GOD, and they think there is an example
 “ to justify this translation, *Exod. xxvi. 3.*
 “ where *Moses* is commanded to take care
 “ that the *five curtains* of the tabernacle were
 “ coupled together, *one to its sister*, as the
 “ *Hebrew* phrase is, meaning *one to another* ;
 “ which, if it were true, would solve several
 “ difficulties : but there are such reasons
 “ against it, as that I cannot think it to be
 “ the meaning. For as *more wives than one*
 “ were indulged *before* the law, so they were
 “ *after*. And *Moses* himself supposes as
 “ much, when he provides, a man should not
 “ prefer a child he had by a *beloved wife*, be-
 “ fore one he had by her whom he *hated*, if
 “ he was the *eldest son* ; which plainly inti-
 “ mates an allowance in his law of *more wives*
 “ *than one*.”

Here, by the good and learned *Bishop's* leave, I would observe that he expresses himself rather inaccurately ; for by saying—
 “ *Moses* himself supposes as much,” and by calling the law he is mentioning, “ *his*”
 “ (MOSES'S)

“ (MOSES’S) law,”—it looks as if MOSES was speaking by his *own* wisdom, and establishing some law merely on his *own* authority ; whereas MOSES, under the immediate inspiration of the *Holy Ghost* (*Numb.* xi. 17, 25. and 2 *Pet.* i. 21.) is the mouth of GOD Himself to the people ; to whom He says, *Deut.* iv. 5. *Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it.* The only instance in which MOSES acted by his *own* authority, was in the matter of *divorces*. When our SAVIOUR is mentioning this, *Matth.* xix. he does not say—GOD *suffered*, but—MOSES, *because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives ; but from the beginning it was not so ;* plainly intimating that such *divorce* was not of GOD’S ordaining, but merely of MOSES’S *permission*, as an expedient to obviate the mischiefs of his enforcing the letter of the law in every instance, by compelling them to retain their wives ; thus subjecting them to their ill treatment and brutality, even to the beating and perhaps killing them. So that, in this *toleration of divorce* for, or upon account of, the *hardness of their hearts*, MOSES might say as PAUL, 1 *Cor.* vii. 12. *To such speak I, NOT the LORD—but as to other things, NOT I, but the LORD, ver. 10.—*The Bishop proceeds—“ And so we find expressly their
“ *kings* might have, though not a *multitude*,
“ *Deut.* xvii. 17 ; and their *best king*, who
“ *red GOD’S law day and night*, and could
“ not

“ not but understand it, took *many* wives
 “ without any reproof : nay, God gave him
 “ more than he had before, by delivering his
 “ (late) master’s *wives* to him, 2 Sam. xii. 8.
 “ And besides all this, MOSES, speaking all
 “ along in this chapter of *consanguinity* and
 “ *affinity*, it is reasonable, as *Schindlerus* ob-
 “ serves, to conclude he doth so here, not of
 “ *one woman to another*, but of one * *sister to*
 “ *another*. There being also the like reason
 “ to understand the word *sister* properly in
 “ this place, as the words *daughter* or *mother*
 “ in others, ver. 17, and chap. xx. 14.
 “ where he forbids a man to take a woman
 “ and *her mother*, or a woman and *her daugh-*
 “ *ter*, as *Theodoric Hackspan* sufficiently notes.
 “ The meaning therefore is, that though
 “ *two wives at a time*, or *more*, were permitted
 “ in those days, no man should take two
 “ *sisters* (as JACOB formerly did, before there
 “ was any positive law against it) begotten of
 “ the *same father*, or born of the *same mother*,
 “ whether legitimately or illegitimately,
 “ (which, though it may seem prohibited
 “ before, because the marriage of a *brother’s*
 “ *wife* is forbidden) yet it is here directly
 “ prohibited, as other marriages are which
 “ were implicitly forbidden before ; for
 “ ver. 7. the marriage of a *son* with his *mo-*
 “ *ther* is forbidden, and ver. 10. the marri-
 “ age of a *father* with his *daughter*.”

* It is to be observed that אחות is used *four* times in
 other parts of the chapter, and necessarily signifies, as our
 translators have rendered it—a *sister*. So Lev. xx.
 17, 19.

To the above remarks of the learned and judicious *Bishop Patrick*, I will venture to add a conjecture of my own, the solidity of which must be submitted to the *reader's* determination. It is very certain that at ver. 16. the marriage of a *brother's wife* is forbidden, and as the *wife's sister* is thereby virtually or implicitly forbidden to marry the *sister's husband*, it might be supposed that there was little occasion to mention the *wife's sister* in direct terms afterwards, ver. 18. But the necessity of this is apparent, when we recollect the precedent of JACOB, which the *Jews* would probably have urged against an *interpretative* prohibition of such a thing, at ver. 16. It was certainly *no sin* in JACOB, because there was *no law* against it; but after this positive law, it could not be done *without sin*, for—*sin is the transgression of the law*.

As there was but *one* man and *one* woman at first, the peopling of the world must have been carried on between much nearer relations, and therefore there could be no law to forbid marriages of this sort. So after the flood, when but *eight persons*, and those all of one family, were left of mankind, we find, for many ages, no laws enacted against marrying within those degrees of relationship, which were afterwards expressly prohibited. But when the * *reason* ceased, the *thing itself* was

* After the *Exodus*, the *Israelites* were restrained from marrying within certain degrees of consanguinity, which had been, till then, permitted, to prevent their taking
wives

was to cease, as demonstrably appears by God's enacting the positive laws against marrying within certain degrees of *consanguinity* and *affinity*; subject nevertheless, like all other of His general laws, to such exceptions, restraints, or qualifications, as He in his infinite wisdom should see expedient. Some of them carry their own reasons with them, others do not, but doubtless all equally wise, as equally the dispensations of *Omniscience*.

By the way, I cannot help observing it as a very extraordinary thing, that the *Christian* churches should adopt one part of the law respecting marriages, and pay no regard to the rest of it. They have made the *eighteenth* chapter of *Leviticus*, from ver. 6 to ver 18, inclusive, a part of our religion; so *Exod.* xx. 14. and some other passages of the law. But why this, and not the rest of the whole law of God, where marriage, as His ordinance relating to all mankind, is concerned? Is not this proceeding of *Christian churchmen*, like that of the *Jewish*, *Mal.* ii. 9. where God complains—*Ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law?* The man who

wives from among the idolatrous nations with whom they lived.

This was the reason which *Abraham* gave, for chusing a wife for *Isaac* from his own kindred, *Gen.* xxiv. 3, & seq. and his descendents for following his example, *Gen.* xxviii. 1, & alib. but which was now entirely ceased, by their being so multiplied; so that they could easily find wives, without being necessitated to marry their near relations, or to contract marriages with the *heathen*. See *Ant. Univ. Hist.* vol. iii. p. 140.

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renders a solid reason for adopting *Exod.* xx. to ver. 17, inclusive, and *Lev.* xviii. from ver. 6 to ver. 18, inclusive, as well as many other parts of that chapter, and at the same time rejecting *Exod.* xxii. 16. and *Deut.* xxii. 28, 29, as touching the *moral* intendment of them, will perform a very difficult task, unless he can prove that marrying a *wife's sister*, for instance, is a greater crime, and of more evil tendency to mankind, as well as more inimical to the interests of *civil society*, than *enticing a virgin—debauching her—and then * abandoning her to infamy and prostitution*; or, that though this was a *sin* in the days of *Moses*, yet it is *no sin* now, and therefore the positive commandments which God enacted to prevent it, are no longer to be considered of any force or obligation.

It is true, that we do not keep *precisely* the † *seventh day*, as the *Christian Sabbath*, looking upon

* This is what the *Jews* do not suffer to be done to this hour—if a *single man* debauches a virgin, he is obliged to *marry her*—if a *married man* does so, he is obliged to maintain her as long as he lives. This in countries where *polygamy* is not allowed; in others, where it is allowed, he must *marry her*. Surely, in this respect, they may *rise in judgment against this generation, and condemn it*.

† I have lately seen a MS. of that laborious calculator and chronologist, *Mr. Kennedy*, in which he would prove, that what we call *Sunday*, is the true original *Sabbath*. This is very clear, that the *week* was divided into *seven days*, so early as at the creation of the world (see *Gen. i.*); that each day is distinguished by the works which God wrought therein; that the day on which God is said to

rest

upon the *fourth* commandment, in that respect, as ceremonial, typical, or prefigurative of something else (whether rightly or no does not come within my present design to consider); but as to the *moral* part, which sanctifies a given *portion* of our time for the public worship of Him to whom we stand indebted for *all*, we very rightly look upon this as the bounden duty and service of *Christians*, as well as *Jews*, till time shall be no more. So with regard to the sum of *fifty shekels*, or the dower according to *the dowry of virgins*, (see *Exod.* xxii. 16. *Deut.* xxii. 29.) this may be set down among the ceremonial or temporary observances of what may be called, to this purpose, the *Jewish* law. But with respect to the *moral* intendment of those laws in *Exodus* and *Deuteronomy*, which was to establish, ratify, and confirm the *marriage-ordinance* in the fullness of its obligation—*they shall be one flesh*—to prevent men from abandoning women to whoredom and prostitution, and all the bitter consequences of seduction and dereliction, those laws ought to be as binding on the consciences of mankind, as the *morality* of the *fourth*

rest from all His work that He had made, is called the *seventh day*, which he hallowed and sanctified on that account; that the fourth commandment recites all this, as the reason for its being kept holy; that the *Jews* have at all times observed our *Saturday* as the *seventh day* or *Sabbath*; that its Greek name Σάββατον, and its Latin name *Dies Sabbathi*, always denoted the *Jewish* SABBATH; and that the day we call *Sunday*, is in the New Testament called Μία Σάββατον, the *first day of the week*—ergo, it cannot be the *seventh*.

commandment, or of any other law of God whatsoever. To these purposes they are as much *moral* laws as *any* of the *ten commandments*. If this be not the case, why do we waste the time of public worship in causing these chapters to be read over to the people? *Deut.* xxii. is our first lesson for the *evening*-service every 4th of *March*; as is *Exod.* xxii. for every 8th of *February* in the *morning*. But it would be very strange if the *minister* was to preface with—"Good people, ye are
 " assembled here to hear the word of God;
 " but ye are not to mind what ye hear, be-
 " cause the protection of females from the
 " lust, villainy, treachery, and cruelty of
 " men, is no longer an object of the
 " laws which I am going to read to you.
 " They bound the *Jews*, but *we Christians*
 " have nothing to do with them." Dreadful as such language would be to hear, it says no more, than every man does, who contends for the obsolescence and abolition of these wise, holy, and salutary provisions for *female* security.

With respect to the New Testament, the subject of *polygamy*, simply considered, is not so much as mentioned, either as good or bad. The more I have searched, the more I am convinced that it is not to be found, unless incidentally in the epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*, and there only hinted at as the possible situation of certain people. Nor is there the least occasion it should be mentioned, as it was amply explained and deter-

minately settled in the *law which was given by Moses* (see John i. 17.); where we do not find it said, that *one law* was given by *Moses*, and *another law* by *Jesus Christ*; but *Ὁ νόμος*, THE LAW—which, in the connection it stands, must signify the *whole law*—all the law which GOD ever ordained or revealed to mortals—*was given by MOSES*; *Grace*—to pardon the transgressions of that law; *Truth*—to fulfil and answer every demand of its *moral* requirements, as well as every ceremonial prefiguration—*came by JESUS CHRIST*. Heb. ix. 15. Col. ii. 17. So that CHRIST is the end of THE LAW for righteousness to every one that believeth. Rom. x. 4.

However, as it is almost universally taken for granted, that “ though *polygamy* might “ be *allowed* under the Old Testament, yet “ it is forbidden under the New Testament;” and as this opinion is as prevalent as that of *transubstantiation*, and the worship of the *Virgin Mary*, are in the church of *Rome*, and for centuries were in the church of *England*, let us proceed farther to examine the foundation upon which it stands.

In the first place, I cannot find, or even conceive, an instance in which the writings of the *apostles* of CHRIST contradict those of MOSES and the PROPHETS. If there could be such a thing, *both* must be rendered *suspicious*—one must be *false*—both sides of a contradiction cannot be *true*. The *adversaries* of revelation have long *tried*, as they have earnestly wished, to find such a thing,

but in vain! God forbid that its *friends* should even imagine it possible! If it be true, that the scriptures of the Old Testament are *able to make us wise unto salvation**, 2 Tim. iii. 15. it must be because they contain the *law* and the *gospel*; for no man can be *wise unto salvation* without the knowledge of these. They certainly contain *both*—the *gospel was preached unto ABRAHAM*, Gal. iii. 8; to the ISRAELITES under the Old Testament, as *well as to us* under the New Testament. Heb. iv. 2. We have *the same spirit of faith*, 2 Cor. iv. 13. and doubtless the *same object of faith*, 1 Cor. x. 4. Numb. xxi. 9. with *John* iii. 14, 15. Wherefore it is not to be conceived, that God should leave the *heirs of salvation* in a state of ignorance touching the *original* institution of marriage, or of the meaning of those *positive* laws which were to enforce it (and this after the giving of the law for 1500 years together) any more under the Old Testament than under the New Testament. It must be as necessary for a *Jew*, in order *to be wise unto salvation*, to know God's mind and will on these interesting and important subjects, as for a *Christian*. Each must be *judged by the same law*—each *saved*, though under different dispensations of it, by the *same gospel*.

* The Apostle adds—*διὰ πίστεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ*—*through faith which is in CHRIST JESUS, i. e. believing Him to be the MESSIAH.* For want of believing which, the apostate *Jews* were not made *wise unto salvation* by the scriptures of the Old Testament.

As little probable is it, that He should allow His own beloved children to fly in the face of His authority, and live in the breach of His *positive law*, for so long a period, without the least check or reproof, when part of His gracious covenant runs in these words, Ps. lxxxix. 30. *If his children forsake my LAW, and walk not in my JUDGMENTS; if they break my STATUTES, and keep not my COMMANDMENTS; then will I visit their offences with the rod, and their sin with scourges.* There are instances enough of this for other things—witness DAVID's *broken bones*, Ps. li. 8. for his *adultery* with BATHSHEBA, and murder of URIAH. But where is there one instance of it for *polygamy*? Wherein did God ever punish it? DAVID died as really a *Christian believer* as St. PAUL did; witness his *last words*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5; and yet, amidst all the explicit confessions he made in the most solemn hours of his *repentance*, he does not once * bewail the *polygamy* he lived in; nay, almost the last act of his life was an act of *polygamy*, in taking ABISHAG

* Which is very extraordinary, and indeed *unaccountable*, if to have more than *one wife at a time* be a mortal *sin*. The character also which we have of David, 1 Kings xv. 5. has, upon this principle, a degree of *obscurity*, which must render it wholly unintelligible—for how can it be said of a man, who lived and died in an open, avowed, wilful, and continued course of deliberate iniquity, that *he did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any thing that He commanded him all the days of his life, save ONLY in the matter of URIAH the HITTITE?*

the

the *Shunamite* to lie in his bosom, his wife BATHSHEBA being then living. For though it be said, 1 Kings i. 4. that *he knew her not*; yet it plainly appears, by what SOLOMON said, 1 Kings ii. 22, 23. that she was so *betrothed* or *espoused* to DAVID, as to be looked upon as *his wife* *. Accordingly she belonged to the crown; was to be at the disposal of the *successor*; and therefore ADONIJAH, who was elder than SOLOMON, by asking for ABISHAG, the late king's widow, to wife, is treated as having a treasonable design against the crown itself, and is put to death as a *traitor*.

Is it then conceivable that *polygamy*, allowed of God uninterruptedly through so many ages and generations with impunity and even approbation, should all of a sudden start up into a *mortal sin*, by the *seventh* commandment's receiving a construction which it never before had—which was never before given to the words in which it was conceived? How could our lives and properties be secure, if time could alter the meaning of our penal statutes?—who will draw the line, and say how much or how little time is necessary to effect this? But if such can be the case with the *moral* law of God, then was the *Psalmist* mistaken in calling it *perfect* (Pf. xix. 7.) for it is *changeable*.

* Comp. Deut. xxii. 23, 24. where a *betrothed* virgin is called the man's *wife*, so as to make it *adultery* to defile her.

Then is it less to be depended on than the laws of the *Medes* and *Persians*. *Esth.* i. 19. —less sacred than the decree of an *earthly monarch*. *Esth.* viii. 8. *Dan.* vi. 15. If this be the case, what man can have any security for his *peace*?—In order therefore to avoid something *worse* than *absurdity*, we must conclude, that the original *institution of marriage*, and the *seventh* commandment of the *decalogue*, mean neither more nor less, where *Christians* are concerned, than where the *Jews* were—or, in other words, they mean precisely *one* and the *same* thing under the New Testament as under the Old Testament.

By taking texts here and there in the New Testament, and detaching them from their reference to and connection with the Old Testament, many *heresies* have arisen; as *Arianism*, *Socinianism*, and perhaps most others. *Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures*. So with regard to *marriage*—because CHRIST said—*Some make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake: he that is able to receive it, let him receive it* (Matt. xix. 12.); and St. PAUL, 1 Cor. vii. 1. and in other parts of that chapter, speaks in favour of a *single life*, with respect to the then *distressed* state of the church (ver. 26) there were multitudes of people, in the early * ages of *Christianity*,

* “ There arose in the church from *antient times*, sects
 “ of *heretics*, who condemned wine, and the use of ani-
 “ mal food, and *marriage*; and not only *heretics*, but
 “ the *orthodox* also, ran into extravagant notions of the
 “ same

tianity, who took these things in a wrong sense, and found out that “ marriage was a carnal thing, and forbidden by the New Testament, as unbecoming the purity of that dispensation :” little reflecting, that the command of *increase and multiply*, and the institution of *marriage* as the means thereof, were the dispensations of God Himself to our *first parents* when they were in a state of perfect innocence, and therefore could not be incompatible therewith.

That venerable man *John Trapp*, on 1 Cor. vii. 8. says—“ The blemish will never be wiped off some of the antient * *fathers*, who, to establish their own idol of I know not what *virginity*, which they themselves had not, have written most wickedly and basely of marriage.” To say truth, I cannot conceive any man’s conscience to be more *taken captive by the devil* (2 Tim. ii. 26) than

“ same kind, crying up *celibacy* and a *solitary life* beyond measure, together with rigid and uncommanded austerities and macerations of the body. (*Fortin*, Rem. vol. i. 278.)—*Christ* therefore, as we may conjecture, was present at a *marriage-feast* and honoured it with the miracle of turning *water* into *wine*, that it should stand in the *gospel* as a confutation of these foolish errors, and a warning to those *who had ears to hear*, not to be deluded by such *fanatics*. *St. John*, who records this miracle, lived to see these false doctrines adopted and propagated.” Ib.

* “ *Jerom*, *Ambrose*, and other *fathers*, have de-claimed against matrimony, and recommended monastic abstinence almost as much as *Manes*, and have employed almost as insignificant arguments.” Id. vol. ii. p. 69.

his is, who is brought under a persuasion that *celibacy* is more *pure* and *holy*, and, as such, more acceptable to GOD than *marriage*. Such a one, who, under this persuasion, abstains from marriage, lives in perpetual * opposition to that command which was given with a *blessing* from GOD—*increase and multiply, and replenish the earth, &c.* This was at the original creation of *male* and *female* upon earth. Gen. i. 27, 28. And again, at the renewal of the earth after the deluge, this commandment stands, Gen. ix. 1, 7. repeated *twice*. Now can an opposition to so positive, so express, so reiterated an ordinance of Heaven, be reckoned a constituent part of *righteousness* and *true holiness*? What is this, but to fly in the face of the *divine wisdom* and *goodness*, and to esteem ourselves *wiser* and *holier* than the LORD of all? So those who

* Dr. *Alexander*, Hist. Wom. vol. ii. p. 269. introduces what he there says on the subject of *emasculation* on a religious account, with this pertinent and sensible observation :

“ The two sexes were evidently intended for each
 “ other, and *increase and multiply* was the first great
 “ command given them by the Author of Nature. But
 “ suppose no such command had been given, how it first
 “ entered into the mind of man, that the propagation
 “ or continuation of the species was criminal in the
 “ eye of Heaven, is not easy to conceive. Ridiculous,
 “ however, as this notion may appear, it is one of those
 “ which early insinuated itself amongst mankind, and
 “ plainly demonstrated, that reasoning beings are most
 “ apt to deviate from nature; and not only to disobey
 “ her plainest dictates, but, on pretence of pleasing the
 “ Author of Nature, to render themselves for ever in-
 “ capable of obeying them.”

prefer

prefer a life of *solitude* to matrimonial connection, as *holier* and *better*, how much *holier* and *better* do they make themselves than Him who said—*It is NOT GOOD for man to be alone?* It is remarkable that the reiterated command for the propagation of the species stands, Gen. ix 7. in direct connection, as it were, and immediately following after the positive law against *murder*: as *privation* of life is an offence against this, *prevention* of life is something very like it, and therefore fitly placed near it in the sacred code.

Some of the fathers were wild enough to say—*hoc dictum, ratione multitudinis liberorum, pertinere ad tempora ante CHRISTUM, non ad nos qui alio vivimus ævo—mundum jam non desiderare ILLUD CRESCITE ET MULTIPLICAMINI.* “ This command, by reason
 “ of multiplying children, belonged to
 “ the *times before* CHRIST, not to *us*, who
 “ live in another age—the world does not
 “ now want that same—*Be fruitful, and multiply.*” Such were the delusions of *Jerom*
 —*Tertullian—Chrysostom—Cyprian—Oecumenius*, &c. Bernard, in Cant. Serm. 59. thus glosses on the words—*The voice of the turtle is heard*, &c.; which he says is “ the preaching of *continence*, respecting those who castrate themselves for the kingdom of heaven. At *the beginning* that voice was not heard, but rather *increase and multiply*; for barrenness was subject to a curse; *poly-*
 “ *gamy*

“gamy was * allowed,” &c. His words are — “*Vox turturis audita est, quæ est predicatio*
 “continentiæ, eos, qui se *castrant* propter
 “regnum cælorum, spectans; cum ab initio
 “vox ista non sit audita, sed magis—*crescite*
 “& *multiplicamini*, sterilitas etiam maledic-
 “tioni fuit subjecta, *polygamia* concessa,” &c.;
 but all this is now at an end, “quia hodie,
 “repleto mundo, non tam fit necessaria
 “quam olim”—“because now, the world
 “being filled (with people) it is † not so ne-

* This same *St. Bernard*, abbot of *Clairval*, from whom the *Cistercian* monks derived the name of *Bernardines*, was one of the most eminent among the Latin writers of the 12th century. He was a man of genius, taste, and judgment, in some respects, in others weak and superstitious. See *Mosh.* vol. i. 591. A pretty clear proof of the latter part of his character lies before us. His confining the command—*Be fruitful and multiply—to the days of the Old Testament*, is certainly a master-stroke of folly and weakness—however, his acknowledgment of the allowance of *polygamy* as a concomitant of that command, is much more scriptural and consistent, than the comments of some more modern expositors (or rather *exposers*) of the scriptures, who contend for the obligation and permanency of the command itself, but deny the permanency and obligation of those laws which the divine wisdom enacted for its regulation.

† *De liberis ferendis non ita solliciti erant Christiani, ut ob id solum ducendæ uxoris necessitatem sibi imponerent; ideo quod finem seculorum de proximo instare suspicarentur. Tertull. de Monogamia. Crescite & redundate evacuavit extremitas temporum.* See *Pole Synop.* in 1 Cor. vii. 1. “The *Christians* were not so solicitous concerning the propagating children, as if, on that account alone, they were to lay a necessity on themselves to marry, because they might suspect the end of the world was very near. *Tertull. de Monogamia.* The (supposed approaching) end of the times vacated the command of—*increase and multiply.*” See *Pole Syn.* 1 Cor. vii. 1.

“cessary

“cessary as formerly.” If the reader has a mind to see how far folly and enthusiasm can carry people on these subjects, let him read *Tertullian’s* epistles to *Eustachius*—to *Gerontius*—and against *Helvetius*; *Tertullian* on Chastity; *Chrysostom* on Virginity; *Cyprian* on the discipline of Virgins; and *Oecumenius* on 1 Cor. vii.—then he will begin to find out how MARRIAGE ITSELF was vilified, and of course what gave rise to the condemnation of *second* marriages of all sorts, therefore of *polygamy*, in the *Christian church*, till the church of *Rome* had the impudence to *anathematize* the man who should say, that “it was *not forbidden by the law of God*,” (see *Brent. Coun. Trent. p. 784*) “just as they did those who should affirm, that for a priest to marry was *allowed by the law of God*.” Ibid.

The consequences of all this unnatural plan of *celibacy* are too many to enumerate, too * *horrible* to particularize. It fared with numbers

* It is an observation of the excellent *authors* of the *History of Popery*, vol. i. p. 359. that “the first law against a certain *unnatural vice* in *England* was by *Anselm* Archbishop of *Canterbury*, in the days of *William Rufus*; which said *vice* seems not to have been heard of here till *priests* were forbidden marriage. However, they treated it very gently, leaving it less penal in a priest, than to enjoy his lawful wife.——*Secular* men, guilty of this crime, were to be absolved only by the bishop; but the *monks* and *priests*, it seems, might civilly absolve *each other*. Yet even this *canon*, such as it is, was soon after recalled, and never published.” BERNARD, Cent. 12th, said, that *sin* was frequent among the

numbers of the *Christians*, who did not like to retain the *divine command* in their practice, as it did with the *beathens*, who did not like to retain GOD in their knowledge—GOD gave them up to uncleanness, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: who changed the truth of GOD into a lye, &c. For this cause GOD gave them up * to vile affections, &c. See Rom. i. 24—28. When we endeavour to stop the course of a river by laying a dam across the stream, the effect must be, that it will either make its way, bearing down all before it, or it will make a passage over its banks, and overflow and destroy the country. Such is the effect of endeavouring to stop the natural course of those desires which the Creator hath implanted in us for the purpose of carrying His *primary command* into execution. They will bear down all before them, or be turned out of their course; and then follows what the history of the *Popish* celibacy abundantly acquaints us with. As this is a subject too indelicate to dwell upon, I will only refer the reader to those books which treat thereof; such as *Fox's Martyro-*

the *bishops* in his time, and that this, with many other abominations, was the effect of prohibiting marriage. BURNET *Hist. of Reform.* vol. ii. p. 91, 3d edit.

* A thousand instances of which might be given—*sed ab uno disce omnes*—Pope *Sixtus V.* on the petition of *Peter Ricu*, cardinal and patriarch of *Constantinople*, of *Jeronymo* his own brother, and the cardinal of *St. Luce*, permitted “unto them and every of them, *sodomy*, with “this clause—FIAT UT PETITUR—Let it be done as it “is desired.” *History of Popery*, vol. ii. 292.

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logy—The *Packets* from *Rome*, collected and published in *two volumes* quarto, by a *set of gentlemen*, 1735, under the title of *The History of Popery*, vol. ii. p. 431. A work this, which is too valuable to be lost to the public; and therefore, as I fear it is near out of print, it were to be wished it should be reprinted in as handsome an edition as that above referred to. See also *Burnet Hist. Ref.* vol. i. p. 191.

As for those men who have the *gift of continency*, they, as it appears from the scriptures, and all experience, are probably *very few*, at least comparatively; and those who received it in the days of *our LORD* and His *apostles*, seem to have received this for the particular purpose of keeping themselves *disentangled from the affairs of this life*, during the infancy and persecution of the church, 1 Cor. vii. 7, 17. Such do not want *cloysters* and *cells* for their security. As for those who have * it not, locking them up together
in

* These certainly constitute the bulk of mankind, as all experience throughout all ages sufficiently shews. The natural structure of the human body, its natural secretions, &c. which are carried on daily, not by any contrivance or management of the creature, but by the power of infinite wisdom, impressed, we know not *how*, on the wondrous mechanism of every part, afford us such *physical* reasons for this, as to amount to demonstration of the necessity of marriage in the generality of men. This observation is abundantly verified by the manner of *OUR SAVIOUR*'s expression, Matt. xix. 11, 12. where He speaks of a power of total abstinence as the immediate and *special gift* of heaven, and this for a *special purpose*, unless
in

in such places, and depriving them of the remedy which God *commands* in *marriage*, has been attended with a two-fold wickedness; 1. in living contrary to the ordinance of Heaven; 2. in gratifying their desires contrary to the course of nature, or at least in some way which the *divine law* hath prohibited. Therefore the *Apostle* doth not say—if *they cannot contain*, let them shut themselves up, or pray that the order of nature may be inverted; but—*let them marry*; it is better *to marry than burn*: as if he had said—“ One or “ *other* of these must be the consequence.” So, when married persons have separated for a while or *season*, on some *religious occasions*—*come together again*, saith he, lest *Satan tempt you for your incontinency*.

From all which it may be gathered, that *celibacy* is not an ordinance of God, but a snare of *Satan*—that marriage is the ordinance of God; therefore, that a man who *may marry*, and doth not, has no more * warrant from God’s word to expect that he shall be kept from *vice*, than that he would be

in the cases He puts of *accidental* imbecillity, arising, in some, from a defect in their constitution, being *born eunuchs*; in others, from external violence by the hands of men.

* For, *continence* being none of those graces that are promised by God to all that ask it, as it was not in a man’s power, without extreme severities on himself, to govern his own constitution of body, so he had no reason to expect God should interpose, when he had provided another remedy for such cases. *Burnet Hist. Ref. vol. ii. p. 91, 3d edit.*

kept

kept from *starving*, if, instead of *eating* and *drinking*, he was to pray that the appetites of *hunger* and *thirst* might be totally annihilated.

The indiscriminate † and total prohibition of *polygamy*, as it has *no warrant* from the word of GOD, may also be the means of plunging many into the mischiefs of uncommanded *celibacy*; for many men there are, who very early in life marry, perhaps without all the consideration which ought to be exercised in so momentous an undertaking—many things may happen which may be very reasonable, and indeed unavoidable, causes of separation from their wives; as for instance—incurable disease of mind or body, unconquerable violence of temper, perpetual refractoriness * of disposition, levity of behaviour—

† If the enacting part of 1 Jac. c. 11. had gone no farther than the preamble, and its severity been confined to—“divers evil-disposed persons, who being married, run out of one county into another, or into places where they are not known, and there become to be married, having another husband or wife living, to the great dishonour of GOD, and utter undoing of divers honest men’s children, and others”—it would have been a wholesome law, and highly justifiable in its penalty on such miscreants; who are undoubtedly guilty of one of the vilest and most injurious frauds that can possibly be committed. It seems to fall within the equity of Exod. xxi. 16. for such persons are a sort of ἀνδραποδισταί, or *man-stealers*.

* It is to be feared, that there are not a few females, who (like other monopolists) take the advantage of the poor husband’s situation, to use him as they please; and this for pretty much the same reason why the *ass*, in the fable, insulted and kicked the poor *old lion*—because it is not in their power to *resent* it as they ought.

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viour—which, though not amounting to such proof as to be the ground of utter *legal* divorce, yet such as may destroy the whole comfort

The advice which king *Ahasuerus* received from his wise men, the seven princes of *Media* and *Persia*, upon queen *Vashti*'s disobedience, would have an excellent effect, could it be followed. Many an high-spirited *female* would have too cogent a reason against the indulgence of a refractory disposition, not to suppress it—her *pride*, which is now the husband's *torment*, would then become his *security*, at least in a great measure; for *pride* is a vice, which, as it tends to *self-exaltation*, maintains uniformly its own principle—not to bear the thoughts of a *rival*. See *Esther* i. 10, &c. As things are with us, the poor man must grind in *mola asinaria* during life.

It is certain, that nothing can be a release from the bond of marriage itself but *death*, or an act of *adultery* in the wife. But that a man is at all events bound to maintain the *external* bond, by cohabiting with a woman, who, instead of being an *help meet for him* (as we say) becomes, by the violence and perverseness of her temper and disposition, a constant and increasing torment; and this after the most friendly, tender, and kind admonitions—is not consonant either to scripture or reason.

Some will tell us, that such a thing must be looked upon as happening by the will of PROVIDENCE, as a chastisement or visitation from Heaven, and therefore must be submitted to and endured.

So is sickness from the hand of GOD; so are afflictions of all kinds, and certainly to be submitted to with patience and resignation; yet to use means of recovery from sickness, and of deliverance from trouble and affliction, are apparent duties; and why not in the other case? The great *Milton* has some excellent and scriptural observations on these points in his *Tetrachordon*; to which I refer the reader.

It was proposed in the *book for reformation of the ecclesiastical law*, 1552, that “ Desertion, long absence, capital enmities, where either party was in hazard of their life, or constant perverseness, or fierceness of an husband against his wife, might induce a divorce”—this fell to
the

comfort of a man's life. By these and many other means, an husband may be reduced to the situation of an *unmarried* man, harrassed by the same desires, subject to the same temptations; yet his condition is ten-fold worse; the one may *marry*, the other cannot the ground by the death of Ed. VI, Burnet Hist. Ref. vol. ii. p. 198.

The whole analogy of scripture agrees with that saying of the *Apostle*—*Let not the wife depart from her husband*; and again—*Let not the husband put away his wife*—1 Cor. vii. 10, 11. But then these things must be construed agreeably to the analogy of that *wisdom which is profitable to direct*—Eccl. x. 10. They cannot mean, that *a wife is not to depart from her husband*, who threatens or endangers *her life*—nor that an husband may not separate from a wife who obstinately sets herself to be the plague and torment of *his*. Surely all this is within the equity of 1 Cor. vii. 15. and that persons are not *under bondage in such cases*.

This kind of things falls under a sort of *necessity*, which must always interpret the law in favour of self-preservation. *Thou shalt do no murder*—constitutes a capital offence in the man who wantonly or maliciously kills another—but if a man slays another in his own defence, it is an excusable homicide: this from the necessary care which every man has a right to take of his own life. The *ship-master* to whom I intrust my goods, is wicked and base, if he wantonly cast them into the sea; but if a storm arise, and he cast them out to save the ship from sinking, he is highly justifiable. I would therefore argue from *necessity* on the point of *separation*; for I cannot find any privilege conferred on one creature to make another wretched, and that without remedy. Of this *necessity* every person must judge at his peril; for—as the old proverb says—*None can tell where the shoe pinches, so well as he that wears it*: but then be it remembered—that *every man shall give an account of himself to God*. Rom. xiv. 12. If this were considered as it ought to be, it would certainly be the best means of binding both parties over to their good behaviour, in all conjugal disputes.

not : so he must remain hopeless and helpless, or plunge into *vice* and misery, because he is debarred of the remedy which God hath provided, stripped of that undoubted privilege with which God and nature have invested him, by the lyes and forgeries of *fathers and councils*, &c. The *Romish* church indeed, at the *council of Trent*, ANATHEMATIZED all who should say, that “ those who
 “ have not the gift of chastity might marry,
 “ in regard that God doth not deny the gift
 “ to him that doth demand it.” This *anti-scriptural* decree, which directly gives the lye to the *Apostle*, 1 *Cor.* vii. 9. is founded upon a *fallacy*, which many fall into, from arguing without the necessary distinction between what God *can* do, and what He *will* do. That He *can* do every thing is without a doubt ; but that we are warranted to expect He *will* do what He hath no where promised, is not true. God *could* certainly have made us to live upon the *air* ; but He hath not : meat and drink are absolutely necessary for our subsistence ; it would therefore be the highest presumption, nay even the madness of *enthusiasm*, for any man to pray that the natural appetites of *hunger* and *thirst* might cease, and that for the future he might live, not on meat and drink, but solely by respiration of *air*. So, to pray to Him whose command is—*Be fruitful and multiply, bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein* (Gen. ix. 7.) that the natural desire which is to lead to this may be annihilated, and the effect of it destroyed,

is to *petition* against the *divine wisdom*, to *arraign* the *divine holiness*, and to remonstrate, in effect, against having any share in an obedience to the *divine command*.—Where is there—where *can* there be a promise, to warrant so unhallowed a proceeding? Surely no where, but in the imaginations of those who have fallen themselves, and who want to lead others into the *snare of the devil*. When we pray against what GOD hath *forbidden*, no doubt we shall, in His own way and time, *obtain grace to help in every time of need*; but when we pray against what He has *commanded*, we tempt Him to deliver us up to the delusions of our own minds, and *our end will be according to our works*—what that end is likely to be, the histories before hinted at very sufficiently declare.

That there may be situations, and particular circumstances, under which it is not only *lawful*, but *duty*, to pray for *continence*—I mean for entire subduction of, and power over, our natural desires—there can be no doubt; as where they would lead us to forbidden enjoyment: but then we must judge of this by the scriptures, not by the prejudices, folly, and superstition of men like ourselves: for, at this rate, we may be praying that GOD would alter His mind, change His will, and vacate His commands, in order to make way for our opposition to them. Whereas, *this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask any thing ACCORDING TO HIS WILL, He heareth us.* And if we know

N 2

that

that He hear us, whatsoever we ask (i. e. ACCORDING TO HIS WILL) we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him. 1 John v. 14, 15.

For a man to pray that he might never again feel the appetites of *hunger* and *thirst*, or, at least, be enabled to refrain entirely from satisfying them, would be deservedly reckoned madness—but to pray to be kept from *gluttony* and *drunkenness*, and all forbidden indulgence and excess, would be asking *according to the will of God*, and the man would have a *scriptural* ground and warrant to expect an answer of peace.

So, if a man takes it into his head, that those other *desires*, which God hath, for the wisest purposes, implanted in our nature, are *sinful in themselves*, and, on *this footing*, prays against them, he is under a sad delusion, and every petition he utters is no less than an arraignment of the *wisdom* and *holiness* of the great *Creator* of all. Yet the *Popish* histories are replete with miracles wrought by *Christ* and the *Virgin Mary*, in answer to such petitions; and no doubt but these *lyes* are most *devoutly* believed by thousands, who make *men's* * *traditions*, and not God's *word*, the rule of their faith.

Besides

* Among the fooleries of the *sixth century*, an entire abstinence from marriage was held the surest way to Paradise. Women were not even suffered to approach the altar, nor touch the pall which covered it, unless when, by the *priests*, it was delivered to them to be washed. The *eucharist* was too holy to be touched by their naked hands,

Besides the evils which have been noticed as the consequences of our *superstition* on the subject of *polygamy*, the utter *extinction* of *families* might also be mentioned; whereas, sooner than this should be the case in *Israel*, we find God enacting a peculiar *positive law*, in order to prevent it; which said law was certainly a virtual command of *polygamy* in many, perhaps in most, cases, as it was very rare to find an *unmarried* man among the *Jews*. The law to which I allude, is that of *Deut. xxv. 5.* where the *husband's brother* was to marry the widow of the deceased, if he died without children—that *his name might not be put out of Israel*. Though all the reasons of this law do not now subsist, therefore the law itself, as far as those reasons have ceased, hath itself ceased; yet it serves to shew us that God did certainly allow *polygamy*, and even *command* it, sooner than suffer inheritances to fail by the *extinction* of *families*.

The end of marriage, say some, is *society* and *mutual comfort*; but they are rather an *effect* of marriage, none of the *principal* end,

hands, they were therefore ordered, by the *canons* of the church, to have a white linen glove upon the hand in order to receive it. See Alexander's Hist. of Wom. vol. i. p. 166. The council of Auxerre, ann. 578, decrees, that *women* communicate with their *dominical*, which some suppose to have been a linen cloth, wherein they received the *species*, as not being allowed to receive them with the bare hand.

See Burnet Hist. Ref. vol. ii. p. 76. 3d edit. Also Chambers—sub voc. *Dominical*.

which is *procreation of children*, and so the continuance of mankind, according to the first institution, Gen. i. 28. As for *comfort* and *society*, they may be between man and man, woman and woman, and therefore no *proper* end of marriage. That *conjunction* which cannot answer the great end for which marriage was ordained by God, should not prevent or hinder that which *can*, nor does it appear from scripture that it was ever intended it *should*.

Frigidity, or perpetual *impotency of generation* on the man's side, is held by our laws, a cause of divorce *a vinculo matrimonii*; therefore it is but reasonable, that a perpetual *impotency of generation* (which at a certain time of a woman's life may be ascertained) in the woman, should be allowed as a reasonable and justifiable ground for *polygamy*. Folly and superstition may set up an objection to this, but *nature*, *reason*, and *scripture*, all unite in their suffrage for the truth of the position. See Gen. xvi. 2, 3. Gen. xxx. 1—9.

Among us, if a man be married to a *barren* woman, he cannot take another wife while she lives, but must content himself with letting his nobility, titles, honours, and family be annihilated, and his estates escheat to the crown, under pain and penalty of being adjudged a *felon* if he marries a *second wife* (living the first) who might be the means of continuing and transmitting all these things to a long and numerous posterity.

This

This foolish superstition is like that of the *Jews* in the days of *Mattathias*, who suffered themselves to be slaughtered by the enemy without resistance, because it was the *sabbath-day*, 1 Mac. ii. 32, 38 ; or like that of the *Carthusians*, who live entirely on *fish*, and would not eat a piece of *other flesh* (see 1 Cor. xv. 39.) even to save their lives.

The modern *Jews* are wiser, for though they in general coincide with the government where their lot happens to be cast, so that they are *polygamous* or *monogamous*, according to the laws of the country they live in ; yet if a *Jew* be married *ten years* to a woman, and has no child by her, he is at liberty to take another, that he may have an heir to his substance ; and in so doing he certainly is justified by the law of God ; which law we have set aside, and established our own superstition in its place, which not only tends to the annihilation and extinction of families, and of course to *depopulation* ; but is, as elsewhere is more fully observed, the source of endless ruin and destruction to the *weaker sex*, whose *seducers*, if married men, are totally exempt from making them that amends, and doing them that justice, which God's law commanded, and which, among *us Christians*, is looked upon as *duty* to withhold, or rather, as a *mortal* * *sin* to comply with.

As

* *Bellarmino*, that great champion for *The Man of Sin*, saith—Lib. 4. de Rom. Pontific, “ Si Papa erraret præ-
N 4 “ cipiendo

As these points are fully treated in other parts of this book, I will now proceed to shew, that the wild notions about marriage, which were introduced into the church, bear an earlier date than the days of *Tertullian*, and those other fathers mentioned before.

“ There were others,” says Mr. *Broughton*—Hist. lib. tit. *Marriage*—“ who simply
 “ exclaimed against marriage as *unlawful*
 “ under the *gospel*. This doctrine was first
 “ taught by *Saturnilus*, a scholar of *Simon*
 “ *Magus* and * *Marcion*, but afterwards bet-
 “ ter known amongst the † *Encratites*; to
 “ these may be added the *Apostolics* or *Apo-*
 “ *tactics*, the *Manichees*, *Severians*, and many
 “ others. The church had great struggles

“ cipiendo vitia, & prohibendo virtutes, teneretur ec-
 “ clesia credere vitia esse bona, & virtutes malas, nisi
 “ vellet contra conscientiam peccare.”

“ If the *Pope* should err in commanding *vices*, and in
 “ prohibiting *virtues*, the church would be bound to
 “ believe that vices are good, and virtues evil, unless
 “ she would sin against conscience.” And again, *Cont.*
Barel. c. xxxi. “ In bono sensu dedit CHRISTUS *Petro*
 “ potestatem faciendi de peccato non peccatum, & de
 “ non peccato peccatum.” “ In a good sense—
 “ CHRIST gave *Peter*” (and of course the *Pope*) “ a
 “ power of making that no sin which is sin, and to
 “ make that to be sin which is not a sin.” What bet-
 ter principle do we proceed upon in the matters here
 mentioned?

* *Marcion* prescribed to his followers an express *pro-*
hibition of *wedlock*. See *Mosheim*, vol. i. p. 110. edit.
Maclaine. One of *Marcion*’s abominable tenets, which
 he laid down to his followers, was, that they should
 “ renounce the precepts of the God of the Jews.” *Ib.*

† See *Newton* on the Prophecies, vol. ii. 442—3.

“ with

“ with these antient *heretics*, who inveighed
 “ bitterly against marriage under the *gospel-*
 “ *state*, and wrought upon many weak minds,
 “ to be guilty of great irregularities, under
 “ pretence of a more refined way of living.

“ The church had also another contest
 “ with the *Montanists* and *Novatians*, about
 “ *second* marriages, these *heretics* rejecting
 “ them as utterly unlawful.”—And indeed
 the ecclesiastical histories inform us, that this
madness (for I can call it nothing else) was
 carried so far, as that *second* marriages were
 stiled no better than *whoredom*; and *eccle-*
siastical persons were forbidden to be present
 at them on pain of *excommunication*. This
 in the very face of the scriptures of God,
 which declare just as much for *second* mar-
 riages as for *first*. Rom. vii. 2, 3. 1 Cor.
 vii. 39. By all this we see what work may
 be made with the scriptures, when the ima-
 ginations of men are let loose, instead of *com-*
paring spiritual things with spiritual, and mak-
 ing God the interpreter of His own word.

As for the practice of *polygamy* among the
 first *Christians*, it was probably very * fre-
 quent;

* So it should seem to have been in times long after
 them, not only among the *laity*, but the *clergy* also; for
 Pope *Sylvester*, about the year 335, made an *ordonnance*,
 that every *priest* should be the *husband of one wife* only.

So in the sixth century, it was enacted in the canons
 of one of their councils, that if any one is married to
many wives, he shall do penance. See Alex. Hist.
 Wom. vol. ii. 217, 272.

The case of *Philip Landgrave of Hesse*, as determined
 by the *six reformers*, is well known. But all these things
 prove

quent ; if not—why did PAUL (1 Tim. iii. 2 and Tit. i. 6.) recommend the choice of *Bishops* and *Deacons* from amongst those who had but *one wife*?—What occasion for this caution of the *apostle's*, if none had *more than one*? That the election was to be made from amongst the *Christian believers*, there can be no doubt, that is to say, of such as had been admitted to *baptism* and the *Lord's supper*, and were enrolled as *members* of the *Christian church*. To suppose that none of these had more than *one wife*, is to suppose the *apostle* giving a needless rule in the election of *Bishops* and *Deacons*. To suppose that any who had *more than one wife*, should be admitted to *baptism* and the *Lord's supper*, if CHRIST had forbidden *polygamy* as *adultery*, is to suppose a greater absurdity still, and that the great *apostle of the Gentiles* was less faithful to his trust, than those *Jesuits* who refused to admit the King of *Tonquin* into the CHRISTIAN church, unless he would put away *all his wives but one*: for which these *pseudo-apostles* were very justly driven out of the country.

The learned *Selden* has proved, in his *Uxor Hæbraica*, that *polygamy* was allowed, not only among the *Hebrews*, but among most other nations throughout the world ; doubt-

prove nothing, with respect to the lawfulness or unlawfulness of the matter in the sight of GOD : I only mention them, to shew that *Christians* have, by no means, thought always alike on the subject. The *opinions* of an inspired *apostle* are certainly good evidence—to these let us attend.

less among the inhabitants of that vast tract of *Asia*, throughout which the *gospel* was preached by the great *apostle of the Gentiles*, where so many *Christian* churches were planted, as well as in the neighbouring states of *Greece*: yet in none of *PAUL's epistles*, nor in the seven awful *epistles* which *St. JOHN* was commanded to write to the *seven churches* in *Asia*, is *polygamy* found amongst the crimes for which they were reprov'd. Every other species of *commerce between the sexes*, is distinctly and often mentioned, this not once, except on the *woman's side*, as *Rom. vii. 3*; but had it been sinful and against the law on the *man's side*, it is inconceivable that it should not have been mentioned on *both sides* equally.

When *St. Paul* says that a *Bishop* or *Deacon* is to be the *husband* of *one wife*, it certainly carries with it a tacit allowance of *polygamy*, as to the *lawfulness* of it with regard to * all *other* men; not that it was *sinful* in one more than in another; but this was a prudential caution in that distressed and infant state of the *church*, that those who were to have the management of it,

* Cardinal *Cajetan*, who disputed with *Luther* at *Augsburg*, and who is said to have given a brief, but judicious exposition of the *Old and New Testament*, writes thus — “ *Pluralitatem uxorum nusquam a DEO prohiberi; adeoque Paulum cum Episcopum vetet habere plures uxores, reliquis concedere.* ” “ A plurality of wives is no where forbidden by *God*: so that *Paul*, when he forbids a *Bishop* to have *many wives*, allows it to others.” *Rainold de lib. Apoc. tom. i. præf. 4.*
should

should have as little avocation and distraction as the nature of things would admit of. PAUL does not say that a *Bishop* or *Deacon* should not be *married*, as the church of *Rome* says, but that he should be the *husband of one wife*; for however those who had *more* could find time to manage their *own* affairs, they could not be supposed to have leisure enough to attend the *church*, and its embarrassed and various concerns, as they ought. Upon this principle he seems to give the preference to those who had *no wife*, 1 Cor. vii. 32, 33. *I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the LORD, how he may please the LORD: but he that is married, careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.* This certainly relates to all *Christians*, but especially to *ministers*. The *heretics* of old took it so strongly in the *former* sense, that they held marriage *unlawful* to *Christians*—the *Papists* take it so strongly in the *latter*, that it is one of the authorities on which they forbid their *clergy* * to marry at all.

There

* The celibacy of the *clergy* was among the errors of very early date, for *Paphnutius*, a venerable *confessor* and *prelate*, who assisted at the *Nicene* council, which was held ann. 325, where there was a dispute, whether “*ecclesiastics* should not separate from their wives, which they had married while *laymen*,” said—*Satis esse ut qui in clerum fuissent adscripti, juxta veterem ecclesiæ traditionem, jam non amplius uxores ducerent.*—“It was sufficient that they who were inrolled
“ among

There are some who interpret the above passages (1 Tim. iii. 2. and Tit. i. 6.) to mean, that a *Bishop* or *Deacon* should, if a *widower*, have had but *one wife*, or have been but *once married*; and this upon the ground of what is said, 1 Tim. v. 9. concerning the *women* who were to be chosen to the office of *Deaconesses*—*Let not a woman be taken into the number under sixty years, having been the wife of one man.* There are also those, who, on the authority of these passages, hold it unlawful for a *minister* * to marry a *second* time on the loss

“ among the clergy, according to the *antient tradition of the church*, should no more marry.” *Clerical celibacy*, and the condemnation of *polygamy*, stand on one and the same footing, and that a very *lame* one; that is to say, on the *antient tradition of the church*; so did the religion of the *Scribes and Pharisees*, and so do the *superstitions* of the church of Rome to this day.

Papchnutius's speech on the occasion is to be found in Jortin, Rem. vol. ii. p. 249. Though what *Papchnutius* says may rather apply against the *clergy* marrying a second time, yet those to whom he spake must be supposed to have holden it unlawful for the *clergy* to marry at all, else how could they be for their separating from the wives they took when *laymen*?

However, even the partial prohibition of wives to the *clergy* did not ripen into a *decree*, 'till about fifty years after, when *Siricius*, bishop of *Rome*, ordained, that if a *clerk* married a *widow*, or a *second wife*, he should be divested of his office. For many hundred years this was not observed, 'till Gregory VII. called *Hildebrand*, by cruel decrees of excommunication, deprived ministers of their *lawful wives*, and compelled the clergy to the vow of *continency*. *Hist. of Popery*, vol. i. 21.

* Whether any carry this point so far as the anonymous answerer to Luther, Tr. *de digamia Episcoporum*, I cannot say; but he declares—“ *Mortaliter peccant qui bigamos (sacerdotes scil) ecclesiæ stipendio susten-*
“ *tant.*”—

loss of his ‡ wife, and unlawful also for *any* woman to *marry again* on the loss of her husband.

“ tant.”—“ They sin mortally who support clergymen
 “ that have been twice married, with the allowance or
 “ stipend of the church.”—Again—“ Peccant qui
 “ scientes ex bigami ore verbum Dei pollui audiunt.”—
 “ They sin, who knowingly hear the word of GOD pol-
 “ luted, by the mouth of a minister who has been twice
 “ married.”—Again—“ Bigamus censendus est, non
 “ solum is qui duas duxit virgines, sed & viduam aut
 “ aliter corruptam.”—“ He is to be reckoned a *bigamist*,
 “ not only who has married two *virgins*, but also he that
 “ hath married a *widow*, or a *woman* otherwise cor-
 “ rupted.”

His conclusion breathes the true spirit of ignorance, superstition, and blind zeal.—“ In summâ—quicun-
 “ que proprias voluptates, & luxuriæ exactionem, *apostoli*
 “ *toli* verbis & *patrum* honestis præponit decretis, non
 “ tamen sacerdotis aut ecclesiastico stipendio cedere dig-
 “ num putat, is non solum tolerandus non est, sed ad
 “ corvos abigendus, quò non ovis morbosa totum cor-
 “ rumpat ovile, & tam laudabilem, bonam, & longævam
 “ consuetudinem pestilenti suo defædet exemplo.”—
 “ In fine, Whosoever prefers his own pleasures, and the
 “ requirements of luxury, to the words of the *apostle*”
 (we must here suppose 1 Tim. iii. 2. and Tit. i. 6. to be meant) “ and to the decent decrees of the *fathers*,
 “ and yet doth not think proper to depart from the
 “ ministry, or his ecclesiastical stipend, is not only not
 “ to be tolerated, but to be driven away to the crows”
 (we should say, *thrown to the dogs*) “ that one scabby
 “ sheep might not mar the whole flock, and defile, by
 “ his own pestilent example, so laudable, good, and an-
 “ tient a custom.”

‡ WILLIAM WHISTON, of famous memory, who, in an early part of the present *century*, was the great reviver and patron of the *Arian* heresy in this country, and might be called *Dr. CLARKE's master*, in this branch of *blasphemy*; has left us some very remarkable matters on record.

husband. These ridiculous opinions owe their birth to the before-mentioned cause, of taking

One is, that the *New Testament* is the only rule of faith, and criterion of truth among Christians—and this to be interpreted by *apostolical tradition*.—Another is, a lesson to all Clergymen, who are so profligate as to subscribe the doctrine of the *Trinity*, as held by the Church of *England*, though they do not believe it; and this, that they may gain admission to those preferments, which, on such terms, they have no right to hold—for *Whiston*, very fairly and honestly, gave up his professorship at *Cambridge*, sooner than dissemble, or give up his opinions; for which he is to be honoured, as an honest man, however mistaken he might be in his religious notions. *Dr. Samuel Clarke*, his pupil, died *Rector* of the valuable living of *St. James's*.

Another matter which *Whiston* left behind him, seems to be a bone for the Clergy, which those would do well to pick, who, with the ingenious *William Whiston*, are for setting up a new *Christian law*, or *law of the gospel*, of which *Christ* and *St. Paul* are the legislators.

Whiston's words are as follow—"It may not be amiss, here to take notice of that *Christian law*, for the marriage of the clergy but once; which is now so frequently broken by *Protestants*, and gives the *Papists* a great handle against them, as observing no rules for restraining their inclinations of that kind. I say, the *Protestants* do allow their clergy, not only to marry more than once, but to act as *Clergymen* after such second marriages, without the least permission under the *gospel* for so doing. Now, though the *law of Christianity* be plain, not only from copies of those laws of *Moses*, which oblige *Christians*; but from the present *New Testament*, the *apostolical constitutions*, and the known interpretation and practice of the *four first centuries*, that *Bishops*, *Priests* and *Deacons*, are allowed to marry but once; yet am not I sure, but they might marry a second time without reproach, if they voluntarily degraded themselves, and reduced themselves among the laity; in whom second marriages were not condemned; though I confess, I do not remember one example

taking words by the *sound*, instead of the *sense*—the usual consequence of detaching scripture from scripture, not comparing it with itself, by taking the whole together. By this, men may prove—*quidlibet ex quolibet*—“*what they please from what they please;*”—and this is the sheet-anchor of error, as well as of many monstrous practices, and so has been in all ages; they can be maintained no other way. The whole doctrine of *transubstantiation*, absurd as it is in all its parts, is held together by the sound of *Hoc est corpus meum*

“ example of such voluntary degradation and reduction
 “ in all *Christian* antiquity. I am confident our great
 “ men are, with *Grotius*, too good critics; and know
 “ *Christian* antiquity too well, to pretend that *St. Paul*’s
 “ ordinances, that a *Bishop*, a *Priest*, and a *Deacon*, must
 “ be the *husband* of *but one wife*, signifies *but one wife at*
 “ *a time*; as some of our *weaker* authors are willing to
 “ interpret it. Nor was this constitution so severe then
 “ as the moderns imagine; for almost all the *bishops*
 “ were originally *fifty* years of age, e’er they were or-
 “ dained. The next order seem to have been in general
 “ considerably above *fifty*; which their very name *pres-*
 “ *byter*, i. e. *elders* of the parish or diocese, directly sig-
 “ nifies: and as for the *deacons*, they were, by parity of
 “ reason, to be supposed between *thirty* and *forty*; which
 “ ages, for these three orders, when we once restore, the
 “ objections of the *moderns* against this law will come to lit-
 “ tle. I mention this here, because I had once a discourse
 “ with *Dr. Clarke* upon this head, who looked upon that
 “ latter interpretation as ridiculous. Nor had he any thing
 “ else to alledge for the modern *Protestant* practice, but
 “ that this command might be supposed peculiar to the
 “ *first age of Christianity*: which yet, I dare say, was a
 “ secret to all those *first ages of Christianity*; which, so far
 “ as I have observed, always esteemed every *law of the*
 “ *gospel* to belong equally to all under the *gospel*, from
 “ the first ’till the *second coming of CHRIST*, our *legislator*.”

See WHISTON, Life of CLARKE, p. 140—142.

—This is my body.—The *sound* of *hæreticum devita*, in a Latin version of Tit. iii. 10. has authorized the most barbarous murders of thousands, who have been burned alive by the inquisition, under the denomination of *heretics*. It has been made to signify *hæreticum de vitâ*—an *heretic from life*; that is—*put him from life—kill him*.—Thus, by separating the word *devita*, and turning the last two syllables into the substantive *vita*, the preposition *de* just answered the purpose. A less *tragical* consequence of this method of interpretation is related by *Erasmus*. He tells of a friar preaching from those words of CHRIST, Luke xvii. 17. which stand in some *Latin* versions—*Nonne decem facti sunt * mundi*—who began to prove there are *ten worlds*. An arch fellow standing by, stopped his mouth with the following words—*Sed ubi sunt novem?*—*But where are the nine?*

It is said of *St. Francis*, that from the words, *Go you into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature*, he thought himself bound to preach to *beasts* and *birds*, and accordingly did it very often, and with *wonderful success*, as they tell us in the legend of his life. Perhaps it was much on a like principle that *St. Anthony* of *Padua* went and preached to the *fishes*—whose discourse to them may be found in *Broughton Hist. Lib.* vol. i. p. 53.

* I would just acquaint the *unlearned* reader, that the substantive *mundus* signifies *a world*—the adjective *mundus* signifies *clean*.

Dr. Hammond, in his note on 1 Tim. iii. 2. says—"What is the meaning of *μίας γυναίκος*—*ἄνθρωπος*—*the husband of one wife*—both here and ver. 12, and Tit. i. 6. and of *ἐνός ἀνδρός* *γυνή*—*the wife of one husband*—chap. v. 9. will not easily be resolved." But surely all difficulty vanishes, when the whole is taken together; and it is observed from the original in what different *tenses* the verbs *γινωσκει* and *εἶμι* are used. This shews that the apostle, 1 Tim. iii. 2, and Tit. i. 6. was describing the situation of the men he was then speaking of, as what *it then was*—and in 1 Tim. v. 9. that of the widows, as to what *it had been*. 1 Tim. iii. 2. Δεῖ ἔν τὸν Ἐπίσκοπον εἶναι *μίας γυναίκος ἄνδρα*—A Bishop ought to BE (not to HAVE BEEN) *the husband of one wife*; and Tit. i. 6. εἴ τις ΕΣΤΙΝ *μίας γυναίκος*—if any BE (IS) *the husband of one wife*. *Ἔστιν* being of the present tense, can signify only what a man is at the time spoken of: whereas the expression concerning the women, 1 Tim. v. 9. is widely different. The woman is called *Χήρα*, a widow; and it is observable, that the verb is not expressed as before, either in the infinitive or indicative mood of *εἶμι*, *to be*, but by the participle of the *præteritum*, or *past time*, of the verb *γινωσκει*, *to be or become*.—It is *γεγονῶσα*—which we have rightly rendered—*having been*—that is—in time past *having been*, or *become the wife of one man*—a widow, who never *had been* but once married; not—that had not had *two husbands* at a time; such a thing was hardly ever

ever heard of, as lawful, even amongst the
beathens * themselves. I would therefore
 harmonize and paraphrase the whole as fol-
 lows :—“ Forasmuch as all things are to be
 “ done decently and in order, (1 Cor. xiv. 40.)
 “ but this cannot be, unless some proper
 “ form of government be established; it is
 “ necessary that proper officers be appointed
 “ to administer that government. Some who
 “ are to be—*Ἐπίσκοποι*—overseers of the
 “ whole; others *Διάκονοι*—deacons, or infe-
 “ rior serving ministers under them. The
 “ first order of men are to overlook the clergy,
 “ as well as the laity—to preach the word—
 “ administer the sacraments, and to have
 “ power to censure evil doers, even as far as
 “ excommunication, the church agreeing there-
 “ to. 1 Cor. v. 4, 5. Such an office should,
 “ doubtless, be filled with men of irre-
 “ proachable characters, and of such con-
 “ duct and dispositions as to be in all respects
 “ blameless, not only for the better mainte-
 “ nance of their authority, but also for the

* Never among *Jews*, or even *Turks*, was it permitted that the woman should have more than one husband at once. Only among the *barbarians* there is mention of the *Πολυανδρῶν*, a people so called, because the wife among them had many husbands. So among the *Medes*, that dwelt in the mountains, it is said a woman was married to five husbands at once. See *Hammond* on 1 Tim. iii. 2. *Montesquieu* mentions the tribe of the *Naires*, on the coast of *Malabar*, where the women have many husbands. *Sp. of Laws*, vol. i. p. 374, octavo. But all this is as contrary to nature itself, as the custom of some of the *Indian* women's drowning their children in the *Ganges*, or exposing them to wild beasts to be devoured.

“ influence of their *example*. As such an
 “ office must moreover require great atten-
 “ tion, those should be chosen, who are en-
 “ tangled as little as possible in the *affairs of*
 “ *this life*. 2 Tim. ii. 4. Therefore, though
 “ for this reason *single men* might in general
 “ answer the purpose best, (1 Cor. vii. 33.)
 “ yet it may be expedient, in some instances,
 “ to chuse *married men* into the offices of
 “ *Bishops* and *Deacons*. Where this is the
 “ case, the election should not be made of
 “ such of the *Christians* as have more than
 “ *one wife*, as such a situation must necessa-
 “ rily involve the person in more *worldly*
 “ *care*, than can be consistent with a due at-
 “ tention to that *care*, which must *come upon*
 “ *them daily*, respecting the *church*. There-
 “ fore, the having more than *one wife* should
 “ always be considered as a bar to a man’s
 “ election, either to the office of a *Bishop* or of
 “ a *Deacon*, (1 Tim. iii. 12.); for though these
 “ last may not have so extensive a jurisdiction,
 “ yet, what with preaching the word—assist-
 “ ing the *Bishops* and *elders*—visiting the
 “ sick—and distributing the *church’s* alms to
 “ the poor—*one wife* and family is as much
 “ as can be at all considered consistent with
 “ any tolerable diligence in the duties of a
 “ *Deacon’s* office.

“ But as the sick are to be visited and at-
 “ tended, as well as the poor relieved, it
 “ may be necessary also to appoint *women* for
 “ these purposes, especially as to attending
 “ and nursing the poor of their *own sex*.

“ These may require many offices highly
 “ improper for *men* to be engaged in;
 “ though the nursing *sick men*, or visiting and
 “ relieving them, may very properly fall also
 “ under the care of *women*. These *women*
 “ may also be called *Διάκονοι τῆς ἐκκλησίας* (see
 “ *Rom. xvi. 1.*) *servants* or *ministers* of the
 “ church. Those who are to be deemed
 “ proper for these offices, must not be
 “ young, raw, unexperienced girls; nor
 “ *married women*, whose attention belongs to
 “ their husbands and families, *1 Cor. vii. 34*;
 “ nor the *younger widows*, who are not arrived
 “ at a time of life suitable to such employ-
 “ ments, *1 Tim. v. 11*: let these *marry*, to
 “ keep themselves out of mischief, ver. 12,
 “ 13, 14. The only *women* who are fit to
 “ be chosen as *servants* or *ministers* of the
 “ church in the respects above mentioned,
 “ should be far advanced in years; that is to
 “ say, not less than *threescore years old*, who
 “ having buried their husbands and *brought*
 “ *up their children*, *1 Tim. v. 10.* have time,
 “ as well as inclination, to devote themselves
 “ to the offices of the church. They should
 “ also be *sober* and discreet persons, who, by
 “ their conduct in their younger years, have
 “ shewn their temperance and sobriety, by
 “ having contented themselves with *one hus-*
 “ *band*, and who, ever after the death of that
 “ husband, have secluded themselves from
 “ any further worldly engagements of that
 “ sort, so as to be justly styled *widows indeed*;
 “ *though desolate, yet trusting in God* (*1 Tim.*
 “ *v. 5.*)

“ v. 5.); and like ANNA, *Luke ii. 36, 37.*
 “ *continuing in supplications and prayers night*
 “ *and day.*”—This I take to be a consistent
 and clear view of these passages taken together.
 As we may from hence infer, that there were
 women in the church younger than *sixty years*,
 by the Apostle’s express exclusion of those
under that age from those offices to which
 women were to be chosen; as also that there
 were many who had been *twice married*, by
 his designing those who had been but *once*
married for the aforesaid offices; so we may
 as fairly conclude, from his saying *a bishop—*
*δεῖ εἶναι—ought to be—*and again, if any, *ἕς τε*
*—is or be the husband of one wife—*that there
 were many *Christians*, not who *had had*, but
 at that *present time* actually had *more than one*
wife. If this had not been the case, it would
 have been as much out of the question to
 have mentioned the having but *one wife*, as
 to have said, that none should be chosen but
 those who had but *one head* or *one body*, when
 it was not to be supposed that any man had
 more.

As to the conceit, that, “ what the *Apostle*
 “ says about the *bishops* and *deacons*, is to
 “ prove that no *minister* may marry a *second*
 “ time,” it is all but as bad as saying, with
 the church of *Rome*, that he *ought not to marry*
at all.

With respect to the business of *polygamy*, as
 to the thing itself, nothing that is here said
 proves it to be more or less sinful in one man
 than in another; that depends wholly on the
 law

law of God delivered by MOSES. Therefore the *prudential* reasons, for which he evidently excepted against *polygamists* being elected to *church-offices*, no more affects the matter of *polygamy*, than the excepting against *women* under sixty years old, proves it *sinful* in a woman to be *younger*, or that, because no woman was to be chosen to the office of a *deaconess* who had been *twice married*, therefore it was *sinful* for the woman to marry again after the death of her husband, contrary to 1 Cor. vii. 39. and to the express advice of the *Apostle*, 1 Tim. v. 14.

As to the supposed unlawfulness of *second* marriages, or the notion, that if a man lost his wife, it was *sinful* to marry again; this began very early in the church, and spread itself even to this country. We find in the time of *Ed. I.* * about the year 1276, the parliament adopted a constitution made by the *Pope* at *Lyons*, to exclude *men* that had been *twice married* from all *clerks privilege*. So that if a man was convicted of *felony*, who would otherwise have had *his clergy*, and it appeared that he had been *twice married*, he was to be *executed like other lay-people*. A statute of 18 *Ed. III.* mitigated the rigour of this law with respect to clerks, by making a suggestion of *bigamy* triable by the *ordinary*, before the *justices* could proceed. But all were delivered from the bondage of such laws by 1 *Ed. VI.* c. 12. § 16. which enacts, that

* See Burnet Hist. Ref. vol. ii. p. 323.

—“ every person, who by any law or statute
 “ of this realm ought to have the *benefit of*
 “ *clergy*, shall be allowed the same, although
 “ he hath been *divers times married* to any
 “ single woman or single women, or to two
 “ wives or more, or to any widow or wi-
 “ dows.”

Among the six famous articles proposed by Henry VIII. to the *parliament and convocation*, one was—“ whether *priests*, that is to
 “ say, men dedicate to God by priesthood,
 “ may, by the law of God, marry after or
 “ no?”—“ After great, long, deliberate,
 “ and advised disputation and consultation
 “ had and made concerning the said article,
 “ as well by the consent of the *King's High-*
 “ *ness*, as by the assent of the *Lords spiritual*
 “ and *temporal*, and other *learned men* of his
 “ *Clergy* in their *convocations*, and by the
 “ consent of the *Commons*, in this *present*
 “ *parliament* assembled, it was and is finally
 “ resolved, accorded, and agreed — that
 “ *priests*, after the order of priesthood re-
 “ ceived as afore, *may not * marry by the law*
 “ of

* In the *eighth century*, some monks pretended, that the angel *Gabriel* had brought *twelve* articles from heaven, one of which was, that *ecclesiastics* must not marry. See Jortin Rem. vol. ii. p. 43.

In the *ninth century*, *Pope Nicholas I.* made a decree to restrain *priests* from marrying. The bishop of *Augsburg* wrote a pathetic letter to the *Pope*, setting forth the sad and mischievous consequences of taking their wives from the *priests*. The letter is at large in *Fox*, vol. ii. p. 392. and well worth reading. He tells *Pope Nicholas*, that his predecessor *Saint Gregory* (i. e. *Gregory*

“ of God. The enacting part of 31 Henry
 “ VIII. c. 14. goes on and says—If any
 “ person shall preach—teach—or obstinately
 “ affirm and defend, that any man, after the
 “ order of priesthood received, may marry
 “ or contract matrimony, he shall be ad-
 “ judged to suffer death, and forfeit lands
 “ and goods as a felon ; and if any priest do
 “ actually marry or contract marriage with
 “ another, or any man that is or hath been
 “ a priest do carnally use any woman to
 “ whom he is or hath been married, or with
 “ whom he hath contracted matrimony, or
 “ openly be conversant or familiar with any
 “ such woman, both the man and the wo-
 “ man shall be * adjudged felons.”

That

gory IV.) made such a decree, but repented of it on this occasion ; to use the old bishop's words as they are there translated—“ Upon a certain day, as *St. Gregory*
 “ sent to his fish-pond to have some fish, his servants
 “ drained it, and found at the bottom 6000 infants
 “ heads, which were brought to him. Upon this he
 “ did greatly repent in himself his decree touching the
 “ single life of the *priests*, which he confessed to be the
 “ cause of that so lamentable murder.” The letter in *Fox*, as above cited, is in Latin ; the translation is referred to p. 393, as having been before inserted ; which the reader may turn to. Whether the above letter was written by the *bishop of Augsburg*, according to *Crit. Hist. of England*, p. 83. or by *Volusianus bishop of Carthage*, as *Fox* seems to think, is very immaterial.

* How ought the *clergy* of the church of *England*, some of whom are not only *married* men, but, having lost a *first*, are now living in comfort, honour, and reputation with a *second wife*, (see before, p. 190. n.) to bless the day when men *dared* to attack the reigning *superstition* of the times, and in the face of all manner of
 reproach,

That all this was contrary to the law of God is apparent; for the *priests* and *Levites* under the Old Testament, and the *apostles* and *other ministers* under the New Testament, who were respectively the *clergy* of the time, might marry, and many of them were actually married men. I therefore mention these things, to shew how we may be led into error, even to *putting men to death, thinking we do God service* (John xvi. 2.) when once the word of God is left for the inventions and *traditions of men*; and how far men may believe things which are *contrary* to scripture are *right* and *good*, and things *agreeable* to

reproach, and even of the danger of *death* itself, boldly vindicate those rights of mankind, with which the LAW OF GOD had invested them, but of which they had been deprived by the insolent tyranny of men like themselves?

It little concerned *Luther*, and his fellow *champions* for the honour of the DIVINE LAW—that they were called *antichrists*—*scandals to religion*—*revivers and propagators of the laws of Mahomet*—or that the Popish *Cerberus*, with his *three heads* of IGNORANCE, SUPERSTITION, and BLIND ZEAL, threatened to tear them to pieces. They *persevered*—they were *successful*—and what they sowed in times of *darkness* and *persecution*, we are reaping in days of *light* and *liberty*.

Thank God, the aforesaid *Cerberus* is chained up. He now will *bark*, and *bark* he may 'till he be *hoarse*; the man who minds him can have but little else to do.

The *author* of this book pretends not to be a *prophet*—but judging from what *has been* to what *may be*, he entertains not the least doubt, that, a *century* hence, the world may either wonder at the *man* who had WILDNESS enough to attack the *present system* of things with regard to *marriage*, or that there were found people who were ABSURD enough to abuse him for it.—This to THOSE WHOM IT MAY CONCERN—VERBUM SAT.

scripture

scripture are *wrong* and *abominable*—that this may become the *creed* of a *whole nation*, nay of a *whole church* including *many nations*, so as to gain the sanction of public *statutes*, the solemn opinions of *lawyers*, the most awful determinations of *courts of justice*. The condemnation of *polygamy* is equally an human device, and has no more authority from scripture for making a man a *felon* and to *suffer death* (see 1 Jac. c. 11.) for having *two wives*, than the stat. 31 Henry VIII. above mentioned, had for hanging a *priest* and the *woman* he had married. All these things are equally the inventions of men, or rather of * SATAN transformed into an angel of light; but the scriptures are the true *Ithuriel's spear*, the *touch* of which alone can make him appear in his own shape, of a *lyar* and a *murderer from the beginning*.

The first public † law in the empire
against

* Luther saith well—"Satanæ commentum est, peccatum fingere ubi nullum est, & justitiam negare, ubi vera est."—"It is an invention of *Satan* to feign *sin* where there is none, and to deny *righteousness* where it truly is."

† In the year 324, Christianity was by law established, when *Constantine*, after the death of *Licinius*, reigned, without a colleague, sole lord of the *Roman empire*. However favourable the protection of the *civil magistrate* was at that time, as well as in after times, to the *Christian religion*, yet from hence we must date the misfortunes which have attended the interference of human power, in the establishment of *human systems* of *faith* and *ceremony*; the *former* of which have often been contrary to God's word, the *latter* utterly subversive of it. The advancement of the clergy in dignities, riches, and
honour

against *polygamy* was at the latter end of the *fourth* century, about the year 393, by the emperor *Theodosius*; this was repealed by the emperor *Valentinian* about *sixty* years afterwards, and the subjects of the empire were permitted to marry as *many wives* as they pleased; “nor does it appear (says *Chambers*, “*tit. Polygamy*) that the *bishops* made any “opposition to this introduction” — (he should have said *restoration*; for if it had not existed before, no law would have been made against it by *Theodosius*) — “of *polygamy* into “the empire.” After all, no * human authority can decide upon the matter, as this has evidently given its suffrage *both ways* upon the same questions. But can the determinations of the *all-wise* God be thus precarious and contradictory? Can the Old Testament and New Testament be at as great a variance as the 31 Henry VIII. c. 14.—

honour, under this *emperor* and his successors; proved so many pernicious baits to sacerdotal ambition, avarice, and pride; and introduced those scenes of vice and profligacy among the clergy, which occasioned it to be said — *Mundus per ostium, pietas per fenestram* — The world entered in at the door — piety flew out at the window.

* For which reason, I forbear to lay any stress on the decisions of our chief reformers, *Luther* — *Melancthon* — *Bucer* — *Zwinglius*, &c. who, after a solemn consultation at *Wittenberg*, on the question — “whether for a man “to have *two wives at once*, was contrary to the *divine law*?” answered unanimously, “That it was not” — and, on this authority, *Philip the Landgrave of Hesse* actually married a *second wife* — his *first* being alive. This proves *what they thought*, but, by no means, that they thought *right*.

which

which makes it *death* for both the man and woman, in the case of a *priest*, to marry, or even to contract matrimony, or to affirm it lawful so to do—and the 5 and 6 * Edw. VI. c. 12. which declares the marriage of *clerks* to be as lawful as the marriages of *other* men?—Had the scriptures forbidden *polygamy*, all the human laws that ever could be enacted, and all the human authorities that ever could be produced, could not make it *lawful in the sight of GOD*—for that were to place men above GOD. On the other hand, if GOD hath not forbidden it, but even *allowed* it, all the men upon earth, though joined with all the *angels* in heaven, cannot make it *sinful*—for this were also to set the creatures above *their MAKER*. Judging and determining on the matter either way, but on the authority

* The preamble to this law affords a most striking proof of the power of *superstition* and *error* over the minds of men: for though 2 and 3 Edward VI. c. 21. had made it lawful for *priests* to *marry*, yet far the greater number of people held such marriages “to be
“inconsistent with the law of GOD, and only to have
“been *tolerated*” by the former statute, “like *usury* and
“other unlawful things, to avoid greater inconvenience
“and evils,” inasmuch that they “accounted the
“children of such marriages to be *bastards*, as born in
“unlawful wedlock, and would hardly attend the or-
“dinances of the church, if administered by *married*
“*priests*.” Our prejudices against *polygamy* arise from the same source of error and superstition, and are equally unwarranted and groundless, as the *law of GOD* no more forbids *this* than it does the *other*. *Forbidding to marry*, where GOD has not forbidden it, is *the doctrine of devils* (1 Tim. iv. 1, 3.) however *holy*, *pure*, and *pious* it may be deemed, whether by *Protestants* or *Papists*.

of

of God's law, is a much more serious thing than is usually imagined; for there are as many woes pronounced on those *who call good evil*, as on *those who call evil good*. *Is. v. 20.*

The learned GROTIUS, in his book *De Ver. Christian. Rel.* lib. ii. § 13. note 12, seems to intimate, that 1 Cor. vii. 4. is to be relied on as a *text* full in point to prove the unlawfulness of *polygamy* amongst *Christians*; for that it was lawful amongst the *Jews*, he not only allows, but brings many authorities to prove, in *note 7. on lib. ii. sect. 13.* But there is another text, at ver. 2, which, as it has been looked upon as a conclusive argument against *polygamy*, I will first consider, and then proceed in order to the following verses, from ver. 2 to ver. 5, inclusive. The words of the text alluded to are—*Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and every woman her own husband.* The strength of the whole argument drawn from this passage consists in a sort of * quibble upon the word *wife*, that, as well as the word *husband*, being in the *singular number*—*wife*, not *wives*. But sup-

* I have elsewhere observed, on the danger of this method of interpretation, we have but to rely on the *sound* of words, and *all second marriages* are directly forbidden, ver. 27. *Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.* Again, the method of establishing doctrines by mere words or sentences detached from the context, might furnish us with as direct a prohibition of marriage to *Christians*, as ever was contended for in the primitive churches; for no words can be plainer than *μὴ ζητεῖς γυναῖκα*—*seek not a wife.*

pose it had been said, “ Let every man have
 “ his *own* servant, and every servant his *own*
 “ master,” would it afford a conclusive proof,
 that because *no man can serve two masters*,
 therefore no master could have *more than one*
 servant ?

However, as this text has been, and is,
 looked upon as a direct proof of the unlaw-
 fulness of *polygamy* among *Christians*, let us
 give it a thorough consideration. In the first
 place, let us restore it to its own genuine
 words ; for our *translators* have introduced
 something which is not in the *original*. The
 words in the *Greek* are—*Διὰ δὲ τὰς πορνείας*—
 the verb *to avoid* is not there—the words *τὰς*
πορνείας, which we translate *fornication*, are
plural, not *singular*, and should be rendered
fornications, or *the fornications*—they being in
 the *accusative* case, are governed, not by the
 verb *to avoid*, which is *not* in the text, but by
 the preposition *διὰ*, which is. This prepo-
 sition *διὰ* has various meanings, according to
 the case it governs. Sometimes it governs a
genitive—sometimes an *accusative*, and then it
 may signify—*for* ;—so *Dr. Hammond* renders
 it here—*but for fornications* ;—also—with re-
spect to—*as to*—*with regard to*—*quod attinet*
ad :—so ver. 26. *διὰ τῇ ἐνεσῶσαν ἀνάγκῃ*, may
 be rendered, *with respect to* (*in respect of*—
Dr. Hammond) *the present necessity*. Many
 authorities might be cited for this use of the
 word, both in sacred and profane writers ;
 and it so suits with the subject-matter of the
 verse

verse in question, that I conceive this to be the sense of *διά* in this place.

The *context* shews very plainly, that what *St. Paul* says, is in answer to some *questions* put to him *by letter*, and sent to him at *Philippi*, where he appears to have been when he wrote the answer; and if we may judge of the *questions* by the * *answer*, which is surely

* This, in the instance before us, is the only way by which we can judge, as we have not the *Corinthians* letter itself to inform us of its contents; for want of which, there are some passages in the chapter *dark and hard to be understood*. Still a meaning they certainly must have; and our judgment, with respect to that meaning, should be directed—first, by a consideration of the manners, customs, dispositions, and characters of the *writers*, also of their situation with regard to time and place—secondly, of the character, situation, and office of the *answerer*; whose holy zeal, and consummate knowledge of the *divine law*, must render it impossible for him to write a syllable which doth not exactly harmonize with the Old Testament.

Both these I have endeavoured to keep in view, while I have been setting down my thoughts on this passage of scripture.

When the *Apostle* saith, *ἕκαστος τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα ἔχει*—*ΤΩ*, he certainly uses the verb *ἔχω* in a larger sense than merely *having*.—This verb signifies to *possess, retain*, which is to *continue the possession of*. So it is apparently used, *Matt. xiv. 4.* where *John the Baptist* tells *Herod*, concerning *Herodias his brother Philip's wife*, whom *Herod* had taken to himself—*Οὐκ ἔξεις σοι ἔχειν αὐτήν*. So *Mark vi. 18.* *Οὐκ ἔξεις σοι ἔχειν τὴν γυναῖκα τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου*—where the *Baptist* cannot be supposed merely to condemn *Herod's having* her at first, but also to declare the unlawfulness of his *retaining, or continuing the possession of* her. So here—let every man *retain, continue the possession of*—*γυναῖκα, the wife*—*τὴν ἑαυτοῦ, of himself*—i. e. who is his own property—and not suffer her to go to other men,

surely a very fair way of judging, they probably concerned a very infamous, but common practice, that of *married men* lending out or

as the custom was, nor take other men's wives to himself.

The Apostle proceeds—καὶ ἐκάστη τὸν ἴδιον ἄνδρα ἔχεται.—Here is an evident variation in the phraseology, on which we shall take occasion to observe hereafter. At present, let it be noticed, that the introduction of the word ἴδιον, must affect, and materially, the meaning of the word ἔχεται, and make also the word ἄνδρα to be taken in an exclusive sense—as thus—*Let every (wife) retain, possess (i. e. keep to, as we say) the man or husband appropriated to her exclusively of all other men.*

Thus both parts of the verse are in the strictest analogy with the *divine law*, and equally contribute to reprobate the breach of it by “community of women,” which was a *Gentile*-custom.

As for the conclusion against *polygamy*, which is drawn from the word *wife*, as well as the word *husband*, being in the *singular* number, it will not hold; for the scriptures plainly shew us, that *wife* must frequently be understood in a *distributive* sense. A remarkable passage of this sort is in 1 Tim. iii. 12. *Let the deacons be the husbands of ONE WIFE*—μίας γυναῖκος ἄνδρες. But can any body suppose, that there was to be but *one wife* amongst them all?—So in the tenth commandment—*Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's WIFE*—This (like *ox, ass, house, servant*) must be taken in a *distributive* sense, and mean any *married woman* or *women* whatsoever. So Exod. xxi. 33, 34. *If a man dig a pit, and not cover it, and an ox or an ass fall therein—the owner of the pit shall make it good, &c.* Are not *pits*, and *oxen*, and *asses*, to be here understood? So in the text, the word *wife* means any *woman* or *women* who may be married to the man.

The word *husband* must be understood in an *exclusive* sense, because the whole *Bible* shews that a woman could have but *one husband*—here well expressed by the ἴδιον ἄνδρα. In short, this scripture, like all others, must be interpreted according to the *analogy of the faith*, by taking a view of the *divine law* in all its parts, and not by con-

or even *marrying* their *wives* to other people, and of course the *married women* going from their *own husbands* to other men. That this was the case in *Corinth*, may well be taken for granted, when we consider that there were so many sources from which such practices were so easily derived. The *Corinthians*

fining ourselves to mere literal construction of a single word—or text—or passage ; for, by this means, we might be brought into all the errors of the *church of Rome*, or into all the *heresies* that have been invented ; not one of which is without some *text* of scripture for its support, which being *wrested* from all the rest, has been *wrested* from its meaning, and made to signify just what the fancies of men have applied it to. It is very truly observed by an antient writer, “ *Turpe est tota lege non inspecta, vel perlecta, de lege judicare.*” “ To judge of the law, without reading over and examining *the whole*, is shameful.”—He proceeds—“ *Ita turpe etiam theologo textum originale in scriptura sacra non inspicere, aut illum studio præterire, & tamen scripturam explicare velle.*”—“ So it is shameful in a *theologist* not to inspect *the original text* in the sacred scripture, or purposely to pass it by, and yet pretend to explain the scripture.” If this sentiment had had its due weight, it would have lessened the numbers of *expositors* and *commentators* on the BIBLE, in no inconsiderable degree.

The interpretation which the *Rhemists* give to this 1 Cor. vii. 2. is by no means to be despised—I will here set it down ; for—

——*Fas est & ab hoste doceri.*——

“ Let every one *have, keep, or use* his own wife, to whom he was married before his conversion ; for the Apostle here answereth to the first question of the *Corinthians*, which was not—whether it were lawful to marry ? but—whether they were not bound, upon their conversion, to abstain from the company of their wives married before in their infidelity ? as some
“ did

Corinthians were a people lewd and * debauched to a proverb—*Κορινθιαζειν*, to *Corinthianize*, or play the *Corinthian*, was a phrase which expressed a man's being abominable:—add to this the fondness of the *Greeks* for the maxims of the divine *PLATO*, as he was called, one of which was—*κοινὰς μὲν γυναῖκας, κοινὰς δὲ εἶναι παῖδας*, that “women and children” ought to be common:—add to this the sect of the *Gnostics*, those early *heretics*, who held “a community of women, and that all” marriage was of † the devil;—these spread their errors far and wide among the *Christian* churches:—and lastly—the horrid practice of *men's lending their wives to others*,

“did persuade them they ought to be.” This would seem a good exposition of the place, if the *Apostle* had not so expressly treated *this point* in the following *verse*.

* See 1 Cor. vi. 11. former part. *Strabo* writes, that there was at *Corinth* a temple of *Venus*, so rich, that it maintained above a thousand harlots sacred to her service, *ἱεροδούλας ἐλαίρας*, which were consecrated both by men and women to that goddess. See the advantage and necessity of the *Christian* revelation, by *J. Leland*, D. D. vol. i. p. 174. Others say, that the number of prostitutes in honour of *Venus* at *Corinth* was 2000. See *Lett. of Jews to Voltaire*, vol. ii. p. 53.

Strabo, *Geog.* lib. xii. speaking of the temple of the moon in *Comana* of *Cappadocia*, where all manner of the most horrid impurities were committed, as parts of religious worship, calls it—“a little *CORINTH*.”

† Among the errors of the famous *Manes* or *Manichæus*, in the third century, this principle is found—he taught, that “all marriage is of the devil, invented by him to tie the souls to the flesh, and to retard their return to heaven.” See *Fortin's Remarks*, vol. ii. p. 50.

was even a sort of † law in *Greece*; this originated first in *Sparta*, that famous city of *Peloponnesus*, on the edge of which *Corinth* stood; from thence it spread itself into the rest of the cities of *Greece*, *Corinth*, no doubt, as well as others. The following account of this vile custom is to be found in *Plutarch's* life of the celebrated *Spartan* lawgiver *Lycurgus*. “ He (*Lycurgus*) next bethought
 “ himself how to prevent that wild and wo-
 “ manish passion of *jealousy*, by making it a
 “ matter of reputation, not only to banish
 “ from matrimony all violence and disorder,
 “ but also to allow men the freedom of im-
 “ parting the use of their wives to deserving
 “ persons, that so they might have children
 “ by them. And he laughed at those who
 “ think the violation of the marriage-bed
 “ such an insupportable affront, that they
 “ revenge it by murders and cruel wars.
 “ *Lycurgus* thought a man not to be blamed,
 “ who, being in years, and having a young
 “ wife, should recommend some virtuous
 “ handsome young man, that she might
 “ have a child by him, who might inherit
 “ the good qualities of such a father, and

† *Grotius*, speaking of the *Jewish* divorces, saith—
 “ Quod et hodie usurpant *Mahumetistæ*, & olim *Græci*
 “ ac *Latini* tanta licentia, ut & uxores ad tempus uten-
 “ das aliis darent *Lacones* & *Cato*.” Which the *Maho-*
metans often practise at this day, and formerly the *Greeks* and
Latins, with such licentiousness, that they could grant the use
 of their wives to others for a GIVEN TIME. This was the
 case among the *Lacedemonians*, and *Cato* also did the same.
 See *Grot. de Verit. lib. ii. § 13.*

“ this

“ this child the good man loves as ten-
 “ derly as if he was his own getting.—On
 “ the other hand, a worthy man, who was
 “ in love with a *married woman* upon ac-
 “ count of her modesty, and well-favoured-
 “ ness of her children, might, without for-
 “ mality, *beg of her husband a night's lodging*,
 “ that he might, like slips of a fine tree,
 “ planted in a goodly garden, have children
 “ of a good race, and well related. For *Ly-*
 “ *curgus* was of opinion, that children were
 “ not so much the propriety of their parents,
 “ as of the *whole commonwealth*; and there-
 “ fore he would not have them begotten by
 “ the *first comers*, but by the best men that
 “ could be found.”

This custom was far from being reckoned
criminal * or *adulterous*, it was applauded
 greatly ;

* The *community of wives* cannot be conceived to have
 escaped the lewd *Corinthians*, when we consider how it
 spread far and wide among the *Gentiles*. This is said to
 have been the custom of the *Troglodytes*, *Agathyrsi*, the
Massagetæ, and *Scythians*, of whom *Strabo* saith—
 “ they had their *wives in common*, agreeably to the laws
 “ of *Plato*.”

The natives of *Russian Lapland* were confusedly known
 to the antients under the name of *Troglodytes* or *northern*
pigmies. They are, for the most part, not above *four*
feet and an half high, and dwell in caverns; they are just
 the same people they were formerly—they are said to in-
 treat strangers to lie with their wives and daughters, as
 an *honour* done to them, and from a desire of amending,
 by their means, the defects of their own race. See *Volt.*
Works. Transf. by *Franklin*, vol. xxviii. p. 10, 12.

Puffendorf has given a long list of other nations,
 which had the same custom among them, such as the an-
 tient inhabitants of *Britain*, the *Sabeans*, those of the

greatly ; and “ so far were women from that
 “ scandalous liberty which has been objected
 “ to them, that they knew not what the
 “ name of *adultery* meant.”—“ A proof of
 “ this we have in *Geradas*, a very antient
 “ *Spartan*, who, being asked by a stranger
 “ what punishment their law had appointed
 “ for *adultery* ? answered—“ My friend,
 “ there are no *adulterers* in our country.”
 “ But, replies the stranger, suppose there
 “ were one, how would you punish him ?”
 He answered—“ The offender must pay to
 “ the plaintiff a bull, with a neck so long,
 “ that he might drink out of the river *Eu-*
 “ *rotas*, from over the top of mount *Taygeta*.”
 “ Why, ’tis impossible to find such a bull,
 “ said the man.” *Geradas* smiling replied—
 “ ’Twas just as impossible to find an *adulterer*
 “ in *Sparta*.” It is endless to observe on
 the total blindness of such people, with re-
 spect to the *law of God* : but when the *Co-*
rinthians were awakened to a sense of *divine*
 things, though, as well as others in that part
 of *Greece*, they had been * infected with this

kingdom of *Calecut*, the antient *Lithuanians*, &c. See *Leland*, vol. ii. p. 129, note r.

Diogenes, whom *Epiëtetus* celebrates with the epithet
 of *divine*, held that “ *women ought to be common*”—look-
 ing upon marriage to be nothing ; “ that every man and
 “ woman might keep company with whom they liked
 “ best, and that therefore children ought to be in com-
 “ mon.” *Ib.* 132. So the *Stoics* held that *women ought*
to be in common among the wise, 133.

* *Lycurgus* established his laws in *Lacedæmon* almost
 900 years before *CHRIST*, so that they had full time to
 circulate and grow into customs, not only in *Greece*, but
 also in many other parts of the world.

Spartan leaven, and followed the *practices*, as they had imbibed the principles of their *neighbours*; yet neither custom, example, nor prejudice of education, could silence, or any longer satisfy their consciences, and therefore they seem to have written to the *apostle*, to know his sense of the matter; which he clearly gives them in the words of the text, and which evidently reprobate this horrid * custom. Having, in the preceding *chapter*, discussed at large the subjects of *whoredom* and *fornication*, and lewdness in general, he begins this seventh *chapter* with an answer to the *particular* questions proposed to him in the letter which he had received from them. The passage may be thus paraphrased:—*Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me—*“ I say, first in general, “ though not for the reasons which some of “ your *philosophers* have given, nor for those “ which the *Gnostics* have suggested, as if “ marriage was *wrong* or *sinful in itself*, but “ for *prudential* reasons, arising from the si- “ tuation of things at this time (ver. 26.) “ *it is good, καλόν, useful, profitable* (ver. 8 “ and 26.) *for a man not to touch a woman—*

* By the manner of *St. Paul's* expressing himself, 1 Cor. v. 1. he seems to insinuate, that, one man's taking or *having another's wife*, was a matter by no means *unheard of amongst the Gentiles*; though a man's *having his father's wife* was.

See an instance of this sort of degeneracy among the *Jews*, Amos ii. 7.

“ to have no dealings with the *other* † *sex*.
 “ (See Matt. xix. 11, 12.) *But with respect*
 “ *to the* * *fornications* you mention, and con-
 “ cerning which you desire to know my sen-
 “ timents ; I answer, conformably to the
 “ law of God, which ordains, that a man
 “ *shall cleave to his wife, &c.* (Gen. ii. 24.)
 “ and that no woman shall *depart from her*
 “ *husband*, and go to another man (see Rom,
 “ vii. 1, 2, 3). *Let every man have his*
 “ *wife*—την γυναῖκα ἑαυτοῦ—the woman who
 “ belongs to him—and not lend her out, or

† Μη ἀπλεῖσαι γυναῖκα is construed by some learned men, by *ducere uxorem*—to marry a wife ;—but I rather think our translation right—not to touch a woman—for, as the word ἀνθρώπου denotes *man* in a general sense, so, to make both parts of the sentence correspond with each other, the γυναῖκα seems to be general also. The word ἀπλεῖσαι answers to the Hebrew *גַּל*, which sometimes means to *touch* or *meddle with*, in a carnal sense. See Gen. xx. 6.

* There is no necessity to restrain the word πορνείας in this place, as our translators seem to have done, to the idea of what is usually meant by that term, that is to say, *commerce with harlots* ; for it is a general word, expressive of *adultery*, as well as what is called *fornication*. Thus the *apostle* uses it but a little before in this very *epistle*, chap. v. 1. to denote not only *adultery*, but also *incest*. It is used as signifying *adultery*, Matt. v. 32. xix. 9 ; for though it may there signify lewdness committed before marriage, but not found out till afterwards, yet it must necessarily also be understood to mean such acts done after marriage ; for our LORD cannot be supposed to mean that the *former* was a just cause of *divorce*, and not the *latter*—so that the word πορνεία must include *both*. Πορνείας being plural, well denotes the complicated crimes of the husband's lending his wife to another man, and the wife's going to another man besides her husband, including also the crime of him who took her.

“ suffer

“ suffer her to marry another, nor let him
 “ take a woman who is not γυναῖς ἑαυτοῦ, *his*
 “ wife, but another man’s, to himself. So
 “ also let every married woman have her own
 “ proper husband—τον ἰδίον ἀνδρα—the man
 “ appropriated to her, exclusively of all other
 “ men upon earth, and not depart, or suffer
 “ herself to *lent* or *given* to any other man.”

I would here observe, that there is a very remarkable difference of expression, which though preserved in many other translations, is not in ours. We render the two clauses just alike, whereas they are not so in the original, but—την ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα, and τον ἰδιον ἀνδρα. The *Latin* translations preserve this difference of expression—*suam uxorem*—*proprium virum*. Leusd. ex Mont. So the old and new translations in *Beza’s Testament*, and *Barker’s Eng. Test.* 1615, and the *Geneva*, 1557. *Let every man have HIS WIFE, and every woman her OWN husband. If all scripture be given by inspiration of GOD, (2 Tim. iii. 16.) and holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, (2 Pet. i. 21.)* I cannot but think that there is some weighty reason for the difference of expression, in giving the epithet ἰδιον to the husband, with respect to the wife, and not to the wife, with respect to the husband. This is observable, not only in this place, but in * many others.

Leigh,

* Rom. viii. 32. we meet with a very material proof of the *emphatical* import of the word ἰδιος, to denote CHRIST’s being GOD’s *own proper son*, in such a sense as no creature is or can be. So, in the passage under consideration,

Leigh, Crit. Sac. observes this, as occurring every where in the sacred writings of the New Testament—*uxoribus sui ἰδιοὶ ἄνδρες tribuuntur passim in sacris*. Leigh sub voc. ἰδιος. *Eph. v. 24, 25. τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν, their own husbands—τὰς γυναῖκας ἑαυτῶν, your wives ;—* and ver. 28, *τὰς ἑαυτῶν γυναῖκας, their wives—τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα, his wife.*—Again, *Col. iii. 18, 19. τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν—propriis viris—their own husbands—τὰς γυναῖκας, your wives* (ἑαυτῶν being understood). *St. Peter*, who was the apostle of the circumcision, uses the same mode of expression, *1 Pet. iii. 1. Let the wives be subject, τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν—propriis viris—to their own husbands.* Comp. *1 Pet. iii. 5.* The word ἰδιος has certainly an emphatical meaning wherever we find it, therefore must have its emphasis in this place, as well as in others. It seems to denote such an appropriation of the husband to the wife, as that she could not have, or go to any other man. This idea may be illustrated from *Rom. xiv. 4. Who art thou that judgest another man's ser-*

deration, the word ἰδιος denotes that the man is the woman's husband, in such a sense as no other man is or can be. CHRIST, *John v. 18*, is said to call God ἰδίον Πατέρα—His own proper father :—this must be in a sense as exclusive of all other beings, as the ἰδιος ἄνθρωπος is exclusive of all other men.

So *1 Cor. xv. 38. God giveth it a body as it pleaseth Him, and to every seed—τὸ ἰδίον σῶμα—his own body, i. e. so peculiarly appropriated to that sort of grain that it can pass into no other.*—Thus hath God given to every WIFE—*τον ἰδίον ἄνδρα—her own—peculiar—appropriated—HUSBAND—so that, while he liveth* (*Rom. vii. 3.*) *she can pass to no other man.*

want ?

vant? τῷ ἰδίῳ κυρίῳ—*proprio domino—to his own master he standeth or falleth.* Here ἰδιος is used as an epithet to the *master* with respect to the *servant* (as 1 Tim. vi. 1. Tit. ii. 9.) and must denote such an *appropriation* of the master to the servant, as to exempt the servant from the authority, power, controul, command, or service of any other, but that *of his own* (Idi8) master; for, as was observed before, *no man can serve two masters*, though the master may have *many servants*; nor is any of his servants the less so, because he has others. So here, 1 Cor. vii. 2. and the other passages referred to, the husband is styled ἰδιον, to denote, that *no other* man can have any power, propriety, or interest whatsoever in the society of the wife, but the ἰδιος ἀνὴρ, the proper and appropriated, peculiar husband. I own that I can account for this difference of expression in no other way, than by supposing the *scripture* consistent with itself, and that the distinction so evident in the Old Testament was to be preserved throughout the New Testament—that though a man might have *more than one wife*, yet a woman could have but *one husband*; had she more, neither could be styled properly ἰδιος ἀνὴρ, for she would be as much the property of one as of the other, or rather be *in common* between, or among them, according to their number; whereas, doubtless, though a man has *two wives*, each may be properly styled γύνῃ ἐαυτοῦ—**his wife*.

* The propriety of this can hardly be disputed, when we reflect that it is the constant language of the Old Testament.

No man may be said to have an *exclusive* property in, or appropriation of himself to, a person or thing, which others may share with him: therefore the word *ιδιος* is peculiarly adapted to denote the *exclusive* appropriation of the *husband to the wife* to be, like the *exclusive* appropriation of the *master to the servant*, such a one as gives to him *alone*, exclusive of all others, the whole *attention, obedience, and service* of the party, so long as the relation which requires these shall continue. Whereas *γυνή*, *wife*, is never found with the *exclusive ιδιος*, but coupled only with the pronoun possessive *ἐαυτῆς*. To illustrate what has been said, we may observe as to *Jacob* and his two wives, *Leah* and *Rachel*, *Rachel* as well as *Leah*, with respect to *Jacob*, was *γυνή ἐαυτῆς*, *his wife* (Gen. xxx. 26. xxxi. 50.) and he the *ιδιος ἀνὴρ*, the *husband*, exclusively of all other men, appropriated to both, infomuch that *neither* could have gone to any other man, without being an *adulteress*: but we no where find *Jacob*, nor any other *polygamist*, stigmatized as an *adulterer* or *fornicator*, on account of his having *two wives*. That such a custom as *Plutarch* shews to have originated from the famous lawgiver of *Sparta*, should reach *Corinth*, which stood at the edge of *Peloponnesus*, is not at all surprizing, when we find it had even reached to * *Rome*. *Numa Pompilius*,
the

* In short, this custom of *lending* wives to each other was so common among the *Gentiles*, that it is inconceivable such a practice should not be among the *Corinthians*.

the famous successor of *Romulus*, anno 715 before *Christ*, established this horrid practice among the *Romans*. He was a great reformer of *religion*, and improver of the *laws*, in which he is said “ to have had a particular
 “ regard to the preserving of *modesty* in wo-
 “ men. Nevertheless, he permitted hus-
 “ bands to lend their wives, after they had
 “ had children by them. This was a kind
 “ of temporary *divorce*, in favour of those
 “ men whose wives were barren; but the
 “ husbands still continued to have the same
 “ power over them, and could call them
 “ home, or lend them to others, as they
 “ pleased.” Ant. Univ. Hist. vol. xi.
 p. 298.

That this practice long continued at *Rome*, there can be little doubt; for, about 700 years afterwards, we find, that *Cato* of *Utica* actually gave his wife *Marcia* to his friend *Hortensius*, and himself assisted at the wedding.

The words of the text clearly apply to the forbidding so monstrous a breach of the law of marriage, and apply equally to *polygamy* as to *monogamy*. *Abigail* and *Abinoam*

Cæsar tells us of the antient *Britons*—“ Ten or twelve
 “ of them have wives in common amongst them—but
 “ every woman’s children are accounted his, who first
 “ possessed her when a virgin; so many men, having
 “ each of them married his proper wife, afterwards
 “ agreed upon that friendly way of possessing them.”
 De B. G. lib. v. Much more to the same purpose may
 be found in *Puffendorf*, book vi. c. 1. § 15.

were,

were, with respect to *David*, each of them *γυνὴ ἑαυτῶν*, *his wife*—for the *Holy Ghost* saith, 1 Sam. xxv. 43. *they were both of them his wives*: and therefore he was the *ἰδιος ἀνὴρ*, the peculiar, proper, appropriated husband to both. If *DAVID* had taken *another man's wife*, or either of them had been lent out or given to another man, this would have fallen directly under the interdict of the *apostle*, who here says no more than is exactly consonant with the *law of Moses*.

Saying that this text forbids *polygamy*, because the word *wife* is in the singular number, is mere trifling; as much so, as contending that a man is to love but *one* * *neighbour*, because it is said, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*; not *neighbours*; or that he shall keep but *one servant*, because it is said,

* We meet with numberless passages in the scripture, where the *singular* is not to be understood *exclusively*, that is, so as not to include the *plural*, but *distributively* so as to include it. Witness the passages referred to, as also the *fourth* commandment—"Thou shalt do no manner of work, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor the stranger that is within thy gates." Are we to gather from hence, that a man is to have but *one son*, *one daughter*, *one man-servant*, *one maid-servant*, &c.? So the ninth commandment—"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."—Endless are the examples of this sort, which might be brought, to shew that, in many instances, the *singular* number cannot be confined to an *exclusive* sense, but must, of necessity, be extended *distributively*, so as to include *many*, and indeed *all* of the kind which is spoken of: and in this sense the word *wife* must be understood, 1 Cor. vii. 2, in order to make the text harmonize with the Old Testament.

Rom.

Rom. xiv. 4. *Who art thou that judgest another's man's servant, in the singular number, not servants, in the plural: or to argue for polygamy, because it is said, 1 Cor. vii. 29. they that have wives, and not every one that has a wife.* All such literal or verbal criticism is mere *word-catching*, far below the dignity of fair argument, and deserves nothing but contempt.

Those who represent the *apostle* as addressing himself to *single* persons, and advising them to marry, *to avoid fornication*, make him guilty of evident *tautology*—for the eighth verse is expressly addressed to the *unmarried* and *widows*. After wishing that all, like himself, could live *unmarried* (that they might have less distraction in their attendance on the service of God, ver. 35.) he adds—*but if they cannot contain let them marry, for it is better to marry than burn*—*πυρρυσθαι*, to be fired, to be on fire—(comp. *Cant.* viii. 6. *Hos.* vii. 4.) that is, with *lust*, or unchaste desires, by which they might be driven into the commission of *fornication*, and all *manner of uncleanness*;—which is, in effect, saying the same thing over again, as some would have him to say at the *second* verse, the very terms of which shew it to be addressed to *married persons*; for how could the *apostle* say to a *single man*—*let him have*—*ἔχῃτω*, retain—*γυνᾶμα ἑαυτοῦ*, his wife; or to a *single woman*—*let her have*, i. e. *keep to*—*τον ἰδίον ἀνδρα*, her own husband? The immediate connection of this verse with the three following,
which

which can belong to *married people only*, is another strong argument for the truth of this observation. Besides, if we understand the *ἐνασος*, *every man*, and the *ἐκαση*, *every woman*, to relate here to any but the *married people*, it may seem to make the *apostle* command *every one to marry*, whether they chuse it or not, contrary to ver. 7, 8. The word *ἐνασος* is certainly *relative*, and must agree with some *masculine* substantive understood: this can be, (agreeably to the rest of the verse) nothing but *ἀνὴρ*, which, in the last clause, must signify *husband*—*τον ἰδίον ἀνδρα*, *her own husband*, and so in the *four times* it is used in the two following verses. The word *ἐκαση* is also *relative*, and must agree with some *feminine* substantive understood; this can be no other than *γυνή*, which, in this verse, is rendered *wife*; and so the *four times* it is used in the following verses. If the *ἀνὴρ* and *γυνή* which are *understood*, had been rendered as they are uniformly in the rest of the *context*, all difficulty in understanding, and all disputes about, the *apostle's* meaning had been saved, and the *evil alluded to* reprobated in as plain terms as the *apostle* intended it should; for the verse would have stood thus—*Let every husband* (or married man) *have his wife*—*γυνᾱμα ἑαυτοῦ*, the wife that belongs to him—and *every wife* (or married woman) *have her own husband*.

When he addresses himself to *single persons*, and advises them to *marry to avoid fornication* (which is certainly the meaning of ver.

ver. 9.) he does not use a doubtful * *periphrasis*, but speaks the matter in the common usual phrase—*γαμησάτωσαν*—*let them marry*. There is something remarkable also at the tenth and eleventh verses, where, in answer to some questions put to him in the *Corinthians* letter, probably about *married persons*, who were in a state of *separation*, he says—*Let not the wife depart from her husband, but if she depart—μὲνέτω ἄγαμος*—*let her remain unmarried*. Comp. Rom. vii. 3. and 1 Cor. vii. 39. This is said to be the command of God, ver. 10; how is it that it is not extended to the husband? It is only said—*Let not the husband put away his wife*. Had he construed Matt. xix. 9. by the *sound* instead of the *sense*; he most probably would have said of the husband also, *μὲνέτω ἄγαμος*—*let him remain unmarried*, in case of her departure, or of his putting her away.

But as those *false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of CHRIST*, 2 Cor xi. 13. had, by their *erroneous* and monstrous doctrines, saying, “that all marriage was of the *Devil*” (for such was the doctrine of the *Gnostics*) sadly distressed the consciences of weak people, and led them to think, that, as *marriage* was a *sinful* thing, therefore all conjugal inter-

* Which seems not conformable to the *idiom* of the Greek language itself, for I do not recollect, that, in any Greek author, any more than in the scriptures, *εχειν γυναικα*, or *εχειν ανδρα*, ever signifies to marry, or stands as a phrase for *γαμειν* or *γαμηθηναι*.

course between married people must be * *sinful* too, we find the *apostle* proceeding, ver. 3. to answer that part of the *letter* which related to their distress on this account. But, so far from deeming the intercourse of married persons wrong, he says—"Let the husband render unto the wife *due benevolence*, Ὁφειλόμενὴν ἐννοίαν (which answers to the *הגב* of *Moses*, *Exod.* xxi. 10. and which we decently render *duty of marriage*) and likewise *the wife unto the husband*. *The wife has not power over her own body*, so as to withdraw herself entirely from the *conjugal debt*, but *the husband* may, as a matter of right, have access to her at all proper times and seasons. Likewise *the husband has not the power* (ἐν ἐξουσίᾳ) *of his own body*, so as to withdraw from the *conjugal intercourse* with his wife, but *the wife*, as a debt due from the contract which the man is under to her, by the very terms of their union, has a right to his *society*.

"Therefore, *defraud ye not one the other*—μη ἀποστερείτε ἀλλήλους—do not *deprive* or *wrong* each other in these respects, under a false notion of its being sinful to come together as man and wife. There may be *times*, indeed, when both may find it

* In the 4th century there were a set of people who censured *matrimony*, and said, that "wives and husbands *cohabiting* together cannot be saved." These were condemned by the council of *Gangara*, anno 369. *Fortin Rem.* vol. iv. p. 43.

“ expedient, and therefore both consent to
 “ separate for a while; as on occasion of
 “ particular abstinence and devotion: but
 “ let not even this exceed the bounds of
 “ prudence, lest, if it should, *Satan* should
 “ take the advantage of you, and tempt
 “ you to gratify, in an unlawful way, those
 “ desires which may lawfully be satisfied
 “ between married persons. However, I do
 “ not insist upon the matter of your parting,
 “ even for a season, by way of *commandment*,
 “ κατ’ ἐπίταγην, but by way of *permission*,
 “ κατὰ συγγνώμην.” See 2 Cor. viii. 10.

I take the Ὀφειλομένην εὐνοίαν of *Paul* to answer exactly to the word הַנֶּעֱלָם, which is rendered *duty of marriage*. This is mentioned by *Moses* to be still due to the *first wife*, though a man take a *second*. *Exod.* xxi. 10. Therefore this passage of *St. Paul* no more concludes against *polygamy*, than that of *Moses*, which actually supposes it. The root הַנֶּעֱלָם, means to *act upon some person or thing*—and, in *Kal*, to *lie with a woman*, *Gen.* xxxiv. 2. *Deut.* xxi. 14. *Deut.* xxii. 24, 29: so that by comparing scripture with scripture, we shall find one part explain the other. There is a similarity of expression between *Moses* and *Paul*, which, I own, makes me think that the *latter* copied the sentiments of the *former*, upon the subjects before us. *Moses* saith לא יגרע וינחה—*her duty of marriage he shall not withhold—subtract—withdraw—keep back from her*. *Paul* says—*let the husband render to the wife due benevolence—*Ὀφειλομένην εὐνοίαν

Ευνοίαν—which is saying the same thing, in other words indeed, but with the same meaning. To *render* to another their due, is not to *withhold* it; and not to *withhold* it, is to *render* it. *Paul* says, μη ἀποσέρειτε—*Moses* says ער לא, which the LXX actually translate εὐ ἀποσέρήσει. This is the very identical verb which we translate *defraud* not. ער signifies to *subtract* or *withdraw*—to *withhold* or *keep back*;—the Greek ἀποσέρω has the *same meaning*—so that *Paul* may be said to translate, just as the LXX have done, the ער of *Moses*. The only shadow of difference between the *Jewish law-giver*, and the *Christian apostle*, consists in the explicitness of the *latter*, and conciseness of the *former*. *Moses's* words imply what *Paul's* declare, and, *vice versâ*, *Paul* declares what is implied by *Moses*. If the *husband* is not to withhold the *marriage-duty* from the *wife*, this must imply that the *wife* is not to withhold it from the *husband*. There must be a parity of reason in both cases. Neither *husband* nor *wife* can have any such power over their own bodies. This is plainly said by *Paul*, and, in consistence with the *law of marriage*, must evidently be meant by *Moses*. For my own part, I as much believe that *Paul* had the doctrine in Exod. xxi. 10. in his mind, when he * wrote

* On looking into *Pole Syn.* in 1 Cor. vii. 3. I find him of the same opinion—"Respexit hîc *Paulus* locum illum, Ex. xxi. 10. ibi enim idem quod hîc marito præcipitur." "*Paul* here looked back to that place in Exod. xxi. 10. for there the same thing is commanded to the husband as here."

that part of the answer to the *Corinthians* letter, wherein he solved their difficulties about the *intercourse* of married people, as it is now in my mind, while I am writing these words ; and thus, upon good authority, even that of the mind of God as delivered by *Moses*, he could be so peremptory in declaring that *such intercourse* was *duty* on both sides, and therefore could not (as the *Gnostic* doctrine might have led them to suppose) be a *sin*.

St. Paul, who, before his conversion, *had profited in the Jews religion above many his equals in his own nation*, *Gal. i. 14.* could hardly, after his conversion, be ignorant of the law of *Moses*; so far from it, he was, undoubtedly, a most accomplished teacher of it. Witness the masterly manner in which he explains the sense and meaning of the *moral* law, and unfolds the whole design of the *ceremonial* law. By the first, he demonstrated the necessity of the *gospel* for salvation—by the *second*, he shewed the *gospel* to have been one and the same, though under different dispensations of it, from the fall of *Adam* to the coming of *Jesus Christ*. Now to set *Paul*, as a law-giver, in *Moses'* seat, and to represent him as condemning that which was not condemned by the *law of Moses*, is to make him act inconsistently with his own declaration, *Rom. iii. 31.* *Do we make void the law through faith?—God forbid! yea—we establish the law.* It is to make him transgress the law, by despising that solemn sanction, which equally forbade *adding to it, or diminishing*

nishing from it; and to put him in much the same situation with those, whether *men or angels*, who preached *any other gospel* than *that which he preached*; for to preach any other law than that which was given by MOSES, is as great an offence as to preach any other gospel than that which came by JESUS CHRIST. This we may learn from the very words of the law itself. Deut. iv. 2. xii. 32.

Dr. Whitby, a very laborious and learned commentator, in his comment on—*the husband, ἐν ἐξουσίᾳ, hath not power of his own body, &c.* says—“Here is a plain * argument “against polygamy.” That here is a plain argument to prove that he shall not withhold the *duty of marriage* from the wife, and that, in this respect, *neither shall defraud* or withhold from the other, on proper occasions, the *conjugal debt*, is very certain. But as what is here said, is founded in the very *nature and essence* of the *marriage-relation*, it must equally concern all that ever have married, or shall marry, to the end of the world, as

* “Sane patres Tridentini,” saith one, “si adhuc in
“vivis essent, ipsis immortales agerent gratias, quod a
“scripturis anathematis in polygamos vibrati justitiam
“atque æquitatem defenderint, eaque præstiterint quæ
“ipsi ne quidem audere voluerint.”

“Truly the *fathers* of the *council of Trent*, if they
“were yet alive, would give immortal thanks to those
“who should defend, out of the holy scripture, the
“justice and equity of their *curse* brandished against *polygamists*, and who should do that, which they themselves would not even dare to attempt.”

well

well under the Old Testament as the New Testament; it bears equally hard, if it be an argument against *polygamy*, on the man who, having *one* wife, *took another*, in the days of *Moses*, as on any one who should do so at this hour (for certainly the marriage-relation must always be the same) and will prove much more against certain *distinguished characters* under the Old Testament, than I dare say the author meant it should. For this we have his own word—"Nor can I think" (says he) "that *Abraham, Jacob, David*, and other " pious men, would have had *more wives*, or " *wives* and *concubines*, had this been a plain " violation of the *law of nature*; nor would " God have so highly approved of them, " had they lived in *adultery*." Note on *Matt. xix. 7, 8*.

When learned and pious men find out " plain arguments" against things which are not mentioned, or even hinted at, in the *text*, it is a shrewd sign that * *prejudice*, and not *judgment*,

* How this learned man's *prejudices* warred against his *judgment* (like many others who want to support a preconceived opinion, against the *truth* which would overturn it) may be seen from the concession he falls into, in his note on *Mark x. 11*. in the following words—" Since to commit adultery is to violate the bed of " another person, he that commits adultery against his " wife, must violate her bed, which no husband can do " only by doing that which an husband lawfully might " do. Since then a right to *polygamy*, is a right to marry more wives than one, he that hath this right, cannot violate the bed of his first wife, by assuming another to it. It therefore must be acknowledged, either

Q 4

" that

judgment, dictates the comment. The *Corinthians* had a very “plain argument” against their fears about married persons *cohabiting* together; and if they compared this scripture, ver. 3, 4, with what *Moses* so positively laid down, *Exod. xxi. 10.* the *polygamists* among them were no more to forsake the company of *their wives*, so as to withhold the duty of marriage, than those who had but *one wife* were to withdraw themselves from *her society* in the same respect.

That there were many *polygamists* among the *Gentile* converts, as well as among the *Jewish*, there can be but little doubt; for, as * *Grotius* observes—*Inter Paganos paucæ gentes una uxore contentæ fuerunt.*—“ Among
“ the

“ that the husband, under *CHRIST*’s institution, and by
“ the original law of matrimony, had no such right,
“ or that he that marrieth another cannot, by that,
“ commit adultery against his first wife.” Here is a fair
ISSUE IN LAW joined—and must be tried by THE LAW—for
CHRIST made no institution whatsoever on the subject
of marriage, but only declared, explained, and enforced
those already made and recorded in the LAW which was
given by *MOSES*. This LAW, like all other RECORDS,
is to be tried by ITSELF—taking the WHOLE TOGETHER.

* *De Verit. lib. ii. § 13.* So *De Jure, lib. ii. cap. 5, § 9.* he says—“ *Sed & apud Græcos, CECROPS primus,*
“ *teste Athenæo, μίαν ἐνὶ ἐξευξεν, unam fæminam uni ma-*
“ *rito attribuit: quod tamen ne Athenis quidem diu*
“ *observatum Socratis & aliorum exemplo docemur.*”

But among the *Greeks*, *CECROPS* first, as *Athenæus* witnesseth, allowed one woman to one man; which, nevertheless, was not long observed, even at *ATHENS*, as we are taught by the example of *SOCRATES* and others.

Παλαι γὰρ εἰώθεισαν καὶ—Ἕλληνες, καὶ Ἰσθαιοὶ, καὶ δύο καὶ τρισὶ, καὶ πλείοσι γυναῖξι νόμῳ γὰρ κατὰ ταύτην συνοικεῖν.
Theodoret—cited by *Whitby*, on *1 Tim. iii. 2.*

“ Formerly

“ the *Pagans*, few nations were content with
 “ one wife ;” and we do not find the *apostle*
 making this any bar to *church-membership*,
 though he expressly does to *church offices*.
 See before, p. It can hardly be sup-
 posed, that if *polygamy* were sinful, that is to
 say, an offence against the law of God, the
 great *apostle* should be so liberal and so par-
 ticular, in his epistle to the *Corinthians*,
 in the condemnation of every other spe-
 cies of illicit *commerce between the sexes*, and
 yet omit this in the black catalogue, chap.
 vi. 9, &c. or that he should not be as zealous
 for the honour of the *law of marriage*, and of
 the *seventh commandment*, which was evident-
 ly to maintain it, as *Ezra* was for that po-

“ Formerly the *Jews and Greeks* were wont to be married
 “ to TWO or THREE, and even MORE wives together.”

Stanley, Hist. of Philosophy, Tit. Socrates, p. 53, says
 —that “ the occasion whereupon the *Athenians* (who from
 “ the time of *Cecrops* had strictly observed single marriage)
 “ allowed *bigamy* in the time of *Socrates*, was, that in
 “ the second year of the 87th Olympiad, and the 3d of
 “ the 88th, *Athens* was visited extremely by the *pestilence*,
 “ which, attended by war and famine, occasioned so great
 “ scarcity of men, that they made an edict, for any that
 “ would, to take *two wives*. *Euripides* made use of this
 “ indulgence, and that *Socrates* also did so, is attested by
 “ *Satyrus* the *Peripatetic* and *Hiernonymus* the *Rhodian*,
 “ who recorded the order; to which *Athenæus* imputes
 “ the silence of the comic poets in this particular, who
 “ omitted no grounds of reproach.”

However, it is much to be doubted, whether *Cecrops*
 did any more than institute *marriage* itself among the
Grecians, who, before his time, lived promiscuously, and
 coupled as their fancy led them. See Ant. Univ. Hist.
 vol. vi. p. 175. — After all, as *CECROPS* is supposed to
 have been *cotemporary* with *MOSES*, it is not very pro-
 bable, that we should meet with any accounts of him,
 which can be depended upon.

fitive law of Deut. vii. 3, against the marrying with *heathens*. Ezra made the *Jews* put away the wives which they had illegally taken, and even the very *children* which they had by them ; How is it that Paul, if *polygamy* was sinful, did not make the *Gentile* and the *Jewish* converts put away every wife, but the first, and annul every *polygamous contract* ? Why not say, that being the husband of one wife was as necessary to the being a *Christian*, as to be chosen a *Bishop* or *Deacon* ? for it certainly was, if *polygamy* be sinful. John the Baptist, at the expence of his liberty, and afterwards of his life, honestly, openly, in words that it was out of the reach of all commentators to sophisticate, or give more than one meaning to, told Herod, with respect to Herodias, his brother Philip's wife—It is not lawful for thee to have her. But how could Paul, with truth, say to the *Ephesians*, the *Corinthians*, or any other people amongst whom he ministered—I have not shunned to declare unto you, *πασαν τὴν βουλὴν*, ALL (the whole) counsel of God—if *polygamy* were a sin, and he did not as openly and plainly declare against it, as he did against every other fleshly transgression of God's pure and holy law ? That he has nowere done this, I may say—*res ipsa indicat*.

As for taking a *text* here or there, detaching it from the *context*, and the *context* itself from the rest of the *Bible* ; then chusing out a single *sentence*, or *word* in a *sentence*, this too without any reference to the original *Hebrew* or *Greek*, and because it seems to sound that way, to make it a proof of some opinion we have

have been taught to hold ; it is that sort of criticism which may make the scripture prove any thing, and every thing, just as fancy leads, and, in short, must render the scriptures themselves as vague and indeterminate as the minds of men are.

Wetstein, Prol. p. 146, speaks of “ certain
 “ doctors—*qui, neglecta connectione contextus*
 “ *sacri, singulas pericopas tanquam singulas sen-*
 “ *tentias, & quasi totidem aphorismos conside-*
 “ *rant ; ut ita liberius suæ phantasiæ indulgere,*
 “ *atque quidlibet ex quolibet efficere possint.*”—
 “ Who neglecting the connection of the
 “ sacred context, consider all the several ver-
 “ ses, as single sentences by themselves, and
 “ as so many *aphorisms*, or general maxims,
 “ so that they may the more freely indulge
 “ their own fancy, and make what they
 “ please from what they please.”

Whoever has read the history of that re-
 nowned worthy, Alderman *Whittington*, whose
 biographer tells us that he was twice Lord
 Mayor of London, may recollect a circum-
 stance in that great man's life, which affords
 an exemplification of the aptness which pos-
 sesses the human mind, to interpret *sounds*
 into that particular *sense* which its own pre-
 judices, however imbibed, wish to put upon
 them. It is said that *Whittington*, being an
 apprentice in the city, left his master with
 an intent to go into the country. It be-
 ing about the time of evening, he sat him-
 self down somewhere in the skirts of the
 town ; his ear was caught with the ringing
 of

of *six bells*, he listened attentively to them, 'till at last he persuaded himself that they proclaimed his future greatness in the following *sounds*:

1 2 3 4 5 6
 “ Turn again *Whittington*,

1 2 3 4 5 6
 “ Lord Mayor of *London*.”

He was so captivated with the conceit, that he not only imagined the *bells* * said this to him, but that all who heard them must give their *peal* the same interpretation; and, no doubt, under such a prepossession, it would have been almost impossible to have persuaded him to the contrary.

So, when men have been brought up under the prejudices of *vulgar opinion* and *common error*, and have their minds swayed and biassed by long custom to one certain train of thinking, they have but to meet with a text in scripture which seems to echo to their *sense* of things, that *sense* will immediately chime in with the *sound*, and both together, almost beyond the power of conviction to the contrary, confirm them still more strongly in their sentiments. What these may happen to be, makes very little difference—

* “ We have an homely English proverb, which says
 “ —‘ As the fool thinks, the bell clinks’—A proverb
 “ applicable, in our opinion, to all arguments founded
 “ on the *sound*, and arbitrary meaning of words.” *Lond.*
Review for 1778, p. 75.

whether it be *transubstantiation*—praying to saints—worshipping images—the doctrine of *purgatory*—or, “though *polygamy* was *allowed* “under *the law*, it is forbidden *under the “gospel*”—or, in short, any other popular prejudice: they will always act towards scripture as *Whittington* did with *the bells*, till that liberality of mind, which ought to possess us, as the privilege of thinking and reasonable beings, opens the way to *free enquiry*—then, and not till then, we shall be noble like the *Bereans*, Acts xvii. 11. who would no longer be led by their own prejudices, or prejudiced by other people’s opinions, but *received the word of GOD with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things* (which they heard preached by *Paul*) *were so*. The scriptures which these *Jews* at *Berea* searched so *diligently*, must have been the scriptures of the Old Testament; no others, if written, could then have come to their hands; but they compared the New Testament as preached by *Paul*, with the Old Testament of *Moses and the prophets*, that they might judge whether the things he declared to them were of divine authority, answerable to former revelations of God’s mind and will, or not. This is the method which I have endeavoured to observe throughout this book, and which I most sincerely recommend to every reader, as well as to every person who wishes to *know* and to *do* the will of GOD. If once we detach the
New

New Testament from the Old Testament; there is not a single *heresy* that will not find something to say for itself, perhaps more than we may be able very easily to answer. But let us carry what we hear to the Old Testament; if it exactly *tallies with that, we may be sure it is a right interpretation of the New Testament; if otherwise, it must be false, because the mind and will of God can never vary, disagree with, or contradict itself. I do not say these things with regard to any particular doctrine of the New Testament, but with respect to the whole.—The doctrine of a *Trinity in unity*—the *incarnation*—*birth*—*life*—*teaching*—*miracles*—*sufferings*—*death*—*burial*—*resurrection*—*ascension*—*glorification*, and *intercession* of *Jesus Christ*, together with the aspect these things bear towards the salvation of mankind, if only related in a book, no single article of which was ever heard or thought of for *four thousand* years together, would challenge little more of my assent or belief, than the *Koran* of *Mahomet*, the *Zend*, or *Zend-avesta* of *Confucius*, or the *Shaster* of the *Bramins*. But when I compare these things with what is contained in the Old Testament, to which the New Testament so often refers for their truth, I then can no

* “The gospel is the best comment upon the *law*, and the *law* is the best expositor of the gospel: they are like a pair of indentures, they answer in every part: their *harmony* is wonderful, and is of itself a conviction. No human contrivance could have reached it.”
Leslie's Works, vol. i. p. 75.

more suppose them to be false, than I can suppose it possible for men to see into futurity, exactly delineate what is to happen ages before it comes to pass, and so exactly, as that the event shall be a literal fulfilment of all that is foretold, unless *He* who is *perfect in knowledge* hath made a revelation or discovery of things which no mortal wisdom or foresight could have ever otherwise been acquainted with. Therefore, when we compare the New Testament with the Old, we may be assured that it is as impossible to be false, as that a *dozen dice* should be thrown the same number for a * million times running; no hazard or casualty could bring such a thing within the most acute calculation of chance; therefore I conclude, that nothing short of *infinite wisdom* and *divine contrivance* could ever first *declare*, and then *fulfil*, the wondrous things which are written in *Moses* and the *prophets*. When therefore I hear of a doctrine as taught in the New Testament, I am certain, if it be true, it must accord with the scriptures of the Old Testament. Thither I carry it; if I find it does not exactly *tally* with what I find there, I am certain it is false, and must arise from some misconception, and, of course, some misinterpretation of the passage where it is supposed to be found. I am told that *sin is a transgression of the law*; when I hear it asserted that *polygamy is sinful*, I consult *the law*; if it be forbidden *there*, I agree to the *sinfulness* of it;

* For which reason, AN INFIDEL may be styled, the most CREDULOUS OF MORTALS.

if not forbidden there, but † *allowed*, I find myself reduced to this *dilemma*—either the asserter of such a proposition, who says he takes it from the New Testament, is *mistaken*; which is *probable*, or the New Testament must *contradict the law*, which is *impossible*.

With respect to what is frequently urged against *polygamy* among *Christians*; that “tho’ it was allowed by the *law of Moses*, yet it is *forbidden by the law of Christ*”—by which CHRIST is made a repealer of the *old*, and a giver of a *new law*—it so affects His character as the *Messiah*, as to render Him, if it be true, *not* the person which *Moses* and the *prophets* represent Him, or what He represented Himself to be. The discussion, therefore, of this *horrid position* requires, and shall have, a *chapter* by itself.

At present, I will advert to an argument taken from the New Testament; to prove the unlawfulness of *polygamy* among *Christians*; though *allowed* to the *Jews* under the Old Testament. *St Paul*, * Eph. v: 31, 32. and in some

† “*Lex Hebræa omnem spurcitiam inhibet, sed plures uni concedit uxores.*” GROTIUS.—“The *Jewish* law restrains all filthiness, but allows a plurality of wives to one man.”

* That *marriage* may be looked upon in a *typical* view; with respect to the union of CHRIST with the church; appears very clearly from this scripture, and the others referred to—but in this view of the matter; *polygamy* and *monogamy* were equally *typical*—the *former*, of the *church*, as consisting of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and of the many and various individual believers among them—the *latter*, of the whole company of *believers*, collectively considered,

as

some other passages, represents marriage as a figure or representation of *Christ and His church*, which is but *one*: whereas, having *more wives* than one at a time, destroys the *analogy* which the marriage-state bears to *CHRIST and His church*. In answer to which, I would ask, If *CHRIST and His church* were not as much *one* under the Old Testament as under the New Testament? Is. liv. 5. *Thy Maker is thine husband, the LORD of Hosts is his name; the GOD of the whole earth shall He be called.* See also Jer. iii. 14, 20. *The church*, taken *collectively*, is but *one*; but *distributively*, it consists of *many*. Rom. xii. 5. *We being many, are one body in CHRIST*—and 1 Cor. xii. 12. *For as the body is ONE, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many, are one body, so also is CHRIST.* So that the argument against *polygamy*, taken from the *union and unity* of *CHRIST and His church*, rather leans the other way; unless, contrary to scripture and fact, it could be proved that the *church* consisted but of *one member*; whereas it consists of *many*, and yet is but *one body*—*one household*—Eph. ii. 19. *One family*, even though the *saints in heaven* be also taken into the account. Eph. iii. 15. The *bride or spouse* of *CHRIST* is but *one*—i. e. *one church*; yet every member of that *church* is as distinctly the *spouse of CHRIST*, as really married to Him that rose from the

as making but *one body*, of which *CHRIST* is the head. Comp. Rom. xii. 5. 1 Cor. xii. 2. with Eph. i. 23. ii. 21, 22.

dead (Rom. vii. 4.) as the *whole* is, collectively considered. Surely these scriptural illustrations of the nature of the marriage-bond, afford a complete answer to that question, “ If a man hath *two wives*, how can he be *one flesh* with *both*—or *each one flesh* with him?” See Eph. v. 30.

We also read not only of the *church* of CHRIST in the *singular* number, but of the *churches* of CHRIST in the *plural*, about forty times in the New Testament; which, by the way, is at least as conclusive an argument for *polygamy*, as the other is *against* it.

From the making CHRIST and *His church* an emblem of *marriage*, or *marriage* an emblem of CHRIST and *His church*, some have looked upon it as a *sacrament*. There is certainly an *outward sign* of something *spiritual*; but as there wants that which is essentially necessary to make it a *sacrament*, which is God’s own appointment of it as such, the more scriptural professors of *Christianity* reject it. For the same reason I would reject those arguments against *polygamy*, which are drawn from the *union of Christ and His church*, because GOD has no where established their authority, (that I can find) either in the Old Testament or the *New*. These arguments would have been just as conclusive under the *former* as under the *latter*. The *church* is called the *married wife*. Is. liv. 1. *Her REDEEMER*, the LORD of *hosts*, is called *her Husband*, ver. 5; but never did *Isaiab*, nor any other of the *prophets*, use this as an argument

ment against the *polygamy* of the people. If this was not done, or so much as hinted at, under the Old Testament, why are we to conceive it to be done under the *New*, when the same things and persons are equally represented under both?

Had *polygamy* been intended to have been condemned under the New-Testament dispensation, I should humbly suppose that our LORD would have put the matter out of question by words too plain to admit of the least dispute: that He *whose loins were girt about with faithfulness* (Is. xi. 5.) would have been at least as *faithful* to His hearers of *the lost sheep of the house of ISRAEL*, to whom He was so immediately sent (Matt. xv. 24.) and spoken to them in as *plain and unequivocal terms* as *John the Baptist* did to *Herod*, upon the subject of *his brother Philip's wife* (Matt. xiv. 4.) There cannot be the least doubt, that numbers of our LORD's *multitudes of hearers* were *polygamists*—*all in principle—many in practice*; nor can it be doubted, that if this was against the *law of marriage*, the law of the *seventh* commandment, or any other *positive law* of GOD, it must be a mortal, damnable * *sin*, involving the *man* as well as the *woman* in

* *St. Augustine*, lib. xxii. c. 47. against *Faustus*, says of *polygamy*—"Quando mos erat crimen non erat."—"When it was a custom, it was no crime."—How this great man could be capable of such an absurdity is astonishing.—The idea of a *sinful act* losing its *criminality* from *custom*, or the frequency of the commission of it, leaves little room for GOD's command, *Exod. xxiii. 2.*

in destruction and perdition. *Paul* could declare openly, that if a woman, living her husband, be married to another, she shall be called an adulteress, and vouches the law of God for

Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil. Nunc propterea crimen est, saith he, quia mos non est.—"Now it is a crime, because not customary."

St. Chrysostom's account of the matter is much more consistent with scripture and common sense, when, speaking of *Abraham* and *Hagar*, he says—ἡδεπω γὰρ ταυτα τοτε κεκωλυο—*These things were not then forbidden.* Indeed *Augustine*, in other parts of his writings, speaks much in the same manner. "There was (says he) a blameless custom of one man having many wives—for there are many things which at that time might be done in a way of duty, which now cannot be done but licentiously—because, for the sake of multiplying posterity, no law forbade a plurality of wives." See *Grot. de Jur.* vol. i. p. 268. note ^b.

St. Austin, like others of the fathers, seem to have supposed that the command, *Be fruitful and multiply*—and the allowance of *polygamy*, as a means of fulfilling it, went hand in hand together:—that as that command—*Ratione multitudinis liberorum, pertinuit ad tempora ante CHRISTUM : non ad nos qui alio vivimus ævo—quia hodie, repleto mundo, non tam necessarium sit quam olim—mundum non desiderare illud crescite & multiplicamini*"—therefore the allowance of *polygamy* ceased with the necessity of the command which it accompanied.

Thus, as is usual, one absurdity beget another. Those who could be persuaded, that the command for the propagation of the human species was only obligatory on former ages, might very consistently suppose, that even marriage itself had very little to do with *Christians*, and that therefore *polygamy* became an evil, which they allowed to have been a lawful thing, and even duty, in times past. Such are the γραιὲς μυθαι—the *aniles fabellæ*—the old women's stories—which the fathers told, till they believed them, and, on their authority, they are believed to this hour!

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his authority, *Rom. vii. 1, 2, 3.* How is it that CHRIST did not openly say the same thing on the part of the man?—Because, if He had, He could *not* have *vouched the law of God* for his authority; and for the same reason, that he could not *say* it, he could not *think* it, for GOD'S *law was within his heart*, *Pf. xl. 8.* and no *thought* could ever be in the *pure and perfect heart* of CHRIST, but what was exactly conformable, *in all things*, to the *pure and perfect law of God*. Let us then carry what OUR LORD saith against *divorce*, *Matt. xix. 9.* to the *law and to the testimony*, and it can no more conclude against *polygamy*, simply considered, than it concludes against *bigamy*, or a man's marrying a *second* wife after the death of his *first*, and being *twice married*. Some of the primitive fathers cited it, to prove that *every second marriage was adultery*; but here their learned and pious advocate, *Dr. Cave*, does allow, that “they stretched “the string till it cracked again.”

I might also observe, that, if *polygamy* was a sin, and even a *national* sin, an *epidemical* transgression of the law of GOD, it is very extraordinary that OUR LORD'S *fore-runner*, *John the Baptist*, who came to *preach repentance*, should not mention, nor even hint at it; for his commission ran thus—*Luke i. 17.* *To turn the hearts of the fathers unto the children, the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the LORD.* It is said of him, *Matt. xvii. 11.*

that he should *restore* or *reform* (ἀποκαταστήσει) *all things*.

No man could have a fairer opportunity to bear his testimony against a *national sin*, than the *Baptist* had; for it is said (Matt. iii. 5.) *Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan; and among the numbers who were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins* (ver. 6.) *there were many harlots* (chap. xxi. 32.) So that it is evident he did not spare to inveigh most sharply against the sin of *fleshly uncleanness*; had *polygamy* been of this kind, he doubtless would have preached against it, which, if he had, some trace would most probably have been left of it, as there is of his preaching against the sin of *whoredom*, by the *harlots* (αἱ * πορναὶ) being said to *believe on him*; which they certainly would not have done, any more than the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* (Matt. xxi. 32.) if the preacher had not awakened them to a deep and real sense of their guilt, by setting forth the heinousness of their sin. He exerted his eloquence also against *public grievances*, such as the extortion of the public officers of the revenue—the *publicans*—τελωναὶ—*tax-gatherers*—likewise against the oppressive methods used by the *soldiery*, who made it a custom either to take people's goods *by violence*, or to *defraud* them of their property,

* The word πορναὶ may signify *lewd women* of all sorts,

by extorting it under the terror of *false accusation*. These were *public grievances*, against which the *Baptist* bore so open a testimony, that the *publicans* and *soldiers* came to him, saying—*What shall we do?* This being the case, is it conceivable that a man of the *Baptist's* character, who was so zealous for the honour of the law, as to reprove even a *king* to his face for *adultery*, should suffer, if *polygamy* be *adultery*, a *whole nation*, as it were, of public *adulterers*, to stand before him, and not bear the least testimony against them? I do not say this is a *conclusive*, but it is surely a very strong presumptive argument, that in the *Baptist's* views of the matter, *polygamy*, *whoredom*, and *adultery* were by no means the same thing.

Having finished, for the present, what I had to say on the subject of *polygamy*, as supposed to be condemned by the New Testament, I must return back to the Old Testament, to shew that *polygamy* was not only *allowed* in *all cases*, but in some *commanded*. The first instance of this which I shall mention, is with respect to the law, Deut. xxv. 5—10. *If brethren dwell * together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's*

* They are said to *dwell together*, not only who were in the *same family*, but in the *same country*. Gen. xiii. 5, 6.

brother unto her. And it shall be that the first-born which she beareth, shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel, &c.

This law must certainly be looked upon as an *exception* from the general law (Lev. xviii. 16.) and the reason of it appears in the law itself, viz. “To preserve inheritances in “the families to which they belonged.” Therefore all lands which had been mortgaged, were to return back to the owner at the year of *jubilee*. See Lev. xxv. 25, 28. See also a special provision against the alienation of lands from the tribe to which they belonged, Numb. xxxvi. 2—9. This was of the utmost consequence in the designs of *Providence* respecting the MESSIAH, whose *genealogy*, with respect to his being of *the seed of Abraham—the tribe of Judah—the family of David*, was not more ascertained by his lineal descent, than by the preservation of *Bethlehem Ephrata* in the *tribe of Judah*, and *family of David*. By which it came to pass, that the prophecy concerning the very *place* of the MESSIAH’s *birth* was literally fulfilled (Comp. Mic. v. 2. with Matt. ii. 4, 5, 6, and Luke ii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.) The *Jewish* * *doctors*, as Mr. Selden, in his *Uxor Hæbraica*, and others after him, observe, made several ex-

* Their comments on the *Old Testament* are about as much to be depended upon, in general, as the *Popish* comments upon the *New*. See *Fulk on Rhemish Testament—per tot.*

ceptions to this law ; but as the *text* makes none, I know not that we are warranted in making any. Bishop *Burnet* seems to have had a right view of the matter, in his observation on the *generality* of this law. His words are—"Yea, *polygamy* was made, in some cases, a *duty* by *Moses's* law ; when any died without issue, his brother, or nearest kinsman, was to marry his wife, for raising up seed to him ; and *all were obliged* to obey this, under the hazard of infamy if they refused ; neither is there any exceptions made for such as were married ; from whence I may faithfully conclude, that what God made *necessary* in some cases, to any degree, can in no case be *sinful in itself*, since God is holy in all his ways. And thus far it appears that *polygamy* is not contrary to the law and nature of marriage."

I am indebted for the above quotation to the * before-mentioned reverend *Dean's* book on *polygamy*, wherein the *Dean* seems a little comforted by the *Bishop's* having said, that he was at a distance from his books and papers, when he gave his opinion on this point.—"This," adds he, "was the best excuse that could be given for so rash a decision, which it would have been for the honour of his reading to have retracted, and which, I sincerely wish he

* See before, p. 116.

“ had retracted, when he returned to his
“ books.”

The good *Dean*, in his zeal against *polygamy*, don't give himself time to consider the soundness of the learned *prelate's* opinion.

As there was *no law* against *polygamy*, there was nothing to exempt a *married man* from the obligation of marrying *his brother's widow* on this account; for if so, things might have been so situated, that *Bethlehem* might have gone away into some other family than that of *David*, into some other tribe than that of *Judah*, and, of course, *Joseph and his wife Mary* have gone elsewhere to *be taxed*; for this might evidently have been the consequence of the *widow and the inheritance* going into the hands of a *stranger*. But God says—*The wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger—her husband's brother shall go in unto her, &c.* Here is a *negative* clause, positively declaring whom she shall *not* marry, and an *affirmative* clause, as positively declaring whom she shall. Now let us suppose, that not only the *surviving brother*, but all the *near kinsmen*, to whom the marriage of the widow, and the redemption of the inheritance belonged, were *married men*; if that exempted them from the obligation of this law—as they could not *redeem the inheritance*, unless they *married the widow* (*Ruth* iv. 5.)—the end of this important law must in many cases be defeated—the widow

dow be tempted to marry a stranger—to put herself and the inheritance into his hands—and the whole reason assigned for the law itself, that of *raising up seed to the deceased*, to preserve the inheritance in his family, that *his name be not put out of Israel*—fall to the ground. For which *weighty* reasons, as there was evidently no law against *polygamy*, there could be no exemption of a man from the positive duty of this law *because he was married*. As we say—*ubi eadem ratio ibi idem jus*.

But the learned *Dean*, in order to overthrow all the *Bishop's* reasoning on the subject, observes from *Selden's Ux. Heb.* that “the *Chaldee* paraphrast, the *Midrash*, and “*Josephus*, agree, that this was the reason “why *Mablon's* next kinsman refused to redeem *Ruth*, his widow, viz.—Because it “was not lawful for him to marry her, having “a wife of his own.” That people should invent reasons for men's actions, where none are given, is not so surprizing as overlooking the reasons that are given, and substituting others which do not appear to be so much as thought of by the parties themselves. This is the case here—*Mablon's* next kinsman is applied to, as by law he ought to have been, to buy *Mablon's* inheritance, and to marry *Ruth* his widow: his answer is neither more nor less than this—“I cannot redeem it for “myself, lest I mar my own inheritance.”—How these words relate to the *lawfulness* or *unlawfulness*

unlawfulness of the matter, was reserved for the ingenuity of modern interpreters to make out—that they may, and most probably do, relate to the *expediency* or *inexpediency* of such a step, the *kinsman's* present circumstances considered, may be easily inferred from the *words* of the *reason* given. The *kinsman* might be married, perhaps have many children, and but a small provision for them—therefore, when he hears of not only disburfing the redemption-price for *Mablon's* parcel of land, but that this could not be done, without marrying a very poor young woman, by whom he might have another numerous family of children, which he could not maintain, educate, or provide for, out of the small parcel of land which was * *Elimelech's*, but must diminish his own inheritance of which he was possessed, to the damage of his other family, he prudently declines the *kinsman's part*—*lest*, said he, *I mar mine own inheritance*. Such a sense as this the words will most certainly bear; but as to their meaning that the man would not marry *Ruth*—“because it was not lawful “for him to marry her, *having a wife of his “own*”—it is a conceit, fetched even farther than, one would think, the utmost unfairness of prejudice itself could reach.

* *Elimelech* was the father of *Mablon*; therefore the land is called *Elimelech's*, it descending to *Mablon* from him.

Since I wrote the above, I have looked into *Bishop Patrick*, on *Ruth* iv. 6. who mentions the passage alluded to in the *Chaldee paraphrast*, and *the Midrash*; and so far from their appearing to say what the *Dean* would make them, there is not a word of any such thing; they put quite a different sense upon the words. As for *Josephus*, I would almost venture to affirm, without looking into the book, that he cannot so grossly contradict himself; for when he is writing that part of the *History of David*, where he speaks of his polygamy, he says—δόντος δε αὐτῷ καὶ γυναῖκας ὡς δικαίως καὶ νομίμως ἡγαγετο—(God) “giving
 “ him wives, which he justly and lawfully
 “ married.” However, having consulted *Josephus* on the subject, I find no such reason assigned by the *kinsman*, for refusing to redeem *Mahlon’s* land, and to marry his widow, as the *Dean* asserts.—*Josephus*, *Antiq.* lib. ix. c. 5. § 4. speaking of the *kinsman’s* refusal, says, that he rejected the offer—
 ἔιναι δε καὶ γυναῖκα λεγὼν αὐτῷ καὶ παῖδας ἤδη
 “ Saying, he had already a wife and chil-
 “ dren;” but not a word that it was “un-
 “ lawful to marry another woman.” Not that *Josephus* represents the matter as the *Bible* does, any more than the learned *Dean* rightly represents the sentiments of *Josephus*. It might not be expedient for the *kinsman* to marry *Ruth*, as he was circumstanced; but this has nothing to do with the lawfulness or unlawfulness of the matter, with respect to
 the

the law of God. *Lawfulness* and *expediency* are very distinct and different considerations. See 1 Cor. vi. 12. 1 Cor. x. 23. As for Mr. *Selden*, he, in the very passage which the *Dean* quotes, resolves the *kinsman's* refusal to marry *Ruth* into a matter of *prudence*, and that for much the same reasons which I have assigned above.

The law itself on which we have been discouraging, was only a *local* and *temporary* institution, and, in the very nature of it, could only concern the *Jews*, and that only with regard to their peculiar situation before the coming of the *Messiah*, when so much depended on the clearness of *family descent* and *inheritance*. It is observable that this law, though not reduced to writing and published till the time of *Moses*, yet existed among the *patriarchs*, as we learn from Gen. xxxviii. 8.

I now shall observe on some laws of more extensive import, the obligation of which must concern *every man*, and that at all times and places, because the evident purpose for which they were ordained, and the reasons on which they are apparently founded, must equally concern all mankind. The *laws* I mean, are those already spoken of, as made for the preservation of the *female sex* from *ruin and prostitution*, by compelling every man to marry the *virgin* he *lies with*. The first of them is to be found *Exod.* xxii. 16; the other *Deut.* xxii. 28, 29. These *laws* must

must in some cases * *command polygamy*, and therefore, in such cases, make it a *duty*; for they are so framed as to admit of no other construction, consistently with the terms in which *Moses* hath recorded them. The terms in which these laws are enacted, with respect to the *men seducing or taking virgins*, &c. are as *indefinite* as words can possibly be: *If a man*, says our translation.—This must, *ex vi termini*, mean *any man* whatsoever, be his situation what it may—which is exactly the sense of the *Hebrew* אִישׁ—As the right understanding of this comprehensive and unlimited word אִישׁ is of the utmost importance to the point in question, I will lay a full and clear explanation of it before the reader.

אִישׁ “ This word has no relation to *kind* or
 “ *species*, though, according to its dif-
 “ ferent genders, it has to *sex*; but is
 “ applied to almost any distinct *being*
 “ or *thing*; as, for instance, to *man*.
 “ &c.” See *Parkhurst's Heb. Lex.*
 sub voc. הוּא—“ which,” saith he,
 “ denotes *existence, subsistence, reality.*”

* Luther, de Digam. Episcoporum, § 65, says—
 “ Nota sunt jura Mosaica de fratris defuncti uxore, &
 “ filia corrupta invito patre, quæ cogunt plurimum uxorum
 “ esse virum.”—“ The Mosaic laws concerning the
 “ wife of a deceased brother, and concerning a daugh-
 “ ter defiled against the father's consent, are well
 “ known, which *compel* a man to have a *plurality of*
 “ *wives.*”

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I will next subjoin the interpretation of *Calasio*, who, in his valuable *Hebrew Concordance*, gives us some *hundreds* of *texts* in which this word occurs.

ש"א " *Persona, creatura*—*nomen generale*
 " *quod essentiam rei non distinguit*"
 —*A person, a creature—a general name,*
which doth not distinguish the essence of
the thing spoken of.

ש"א " *Homo generaliter complectens mas-*
 " *culum & fœminam.*" *MAN gene-*
rally, including male and female.

ש"א " *Quis—quilibet—aliquis—unusquisque*
 " *—quisque—alter.*" —*Who—whoso-*
ever—any one— every one—* every*
man—any other—
 " unus ullus"
 some one any one.

ש"א " *Sexus masculus in qualibet animan-*
 " *tium specie*" cum " *mentio fœmi-*
 " *næ additur.*" Ut Gen. vii. 2. (xxiv.
 16.) *The MALE-SEX in any species*
of animals where the female is also men-
tioned.

ש"א " *Vir—maritus—si cum uxore confe-*
 " *ratur.*" Gen. iii. 6. *An HUSBAND,*
a MARRIED MAN, where joined with
WIFE.

* Thus it is rendered, Job. xlii. 11.

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The reader has now before him the meaning of the word אִישׁ, wheresoever it may be used, as applicable *to*, or significant *of*, mankind; and by this may see the use of it throughout the Bible where *man* is mentioned. He may also see that the phrase כִּי אִישׁ—*If a man*, &c. so far from carrying any exception with it, as to a man's situation of being *married* or *unmarried*, excludes all exception whatsoever wherever we meet with it; therefore as much in the texts of *Exodus* and *Deuteronomy* as elsewhere. Let the reader take the *Hebrew*, or even the *English* concordance, and try the experiment: he will find that כִּי אִישׁ in *Hebrew*, and *If any man* in *English*, are in the scriptures, as in every other book I ever met with, as *indefinite* as words can be, with relation to the subject in question.

But if no exception as to the *situation of the man* is expressed, is it not implied?—So far from that, the *Holy Ghost* (in this passage particularly) has demonstrably guarded against any such implication, and this by adding the words *not betrothed* to the description of the *virgin* or *damsel*, which is done in both places. *Expressio unius est exclusio alterius*—the expressing an *exception* with regard to the *woman*, but *none* with respect to the *man*, proves, as far as the soundest rules of construction of all laws can prove, that *none* was intended.

Had any restriction of this law with regard to the *situation* of the *man* been intended, it might easily have been expressed, by only add-

ing some *restrictive* expression or * epithet to the description of the *man* as to that of the *damsel*. But, instead of any thing of this sort, we find the indefinite אִישׁ; and therefore our translators have rightly rendered it *a man* indefinitely;—so the LXX—ἐάν τις—but *if any man*;—the Latin—*si vir*—*if a man*;—the French of D. Martin—*si quelqu'un*—*if any one*. Though all the *translators* of the *Bible* which I have met with, have modestly, humbly, and faithfully represented the mind of God as He has been pleased to reveal it, yet some expositors have ventured to interpret כִּי אִישׁ—*if a man*—by—*If an unmarried man*—thus

* The restrictive description of the *damsel* is לֹא אֲרֻשָּׁה—*non desponsata*—*not betrothed*. But no אֲרֻשָּׁה is added to the *description* of the *man*. And it is very remarkable, that though *betrothing* is used so often in the *Bible*, it always relates to the *woman*, never to the *man*, as the *person betrothed*. The *man* is said to *betroth* a *woman*, as Deut. xxviii. 30. Deut. xx. 7. & al.—so when *betrothing* is figuratively used, as Hos. ii. 19, 20. But in neither sense is it once used in all the scriptures *passively on the man's side*.

This distinction is also maintained in the New Testament. See Matt. i. 18. Luke i. 27; ii. 5. 2 Cor. xi. 2. This can make no difference with regard to DIVORCE; but it seems to make a *considerable* one in certain other respects.

Agreeably to the above remarks, Gronovius on Grot. de Jure. lib. ii. c. 5. § 8. n. 20. observes, that where Grotius speaks of the woman's contracting herself to the man, there is "tacitly implied, that the contract on the man's side is not by *nature*, but from *positive institution*." See before, p. 22. n. This must mean *human institution*, for there is no trace of such a thing in the *Bible*, as the confinement of the word אֲרֻשָּׁה to the side of the woman sufficiently demonstrates.

corrupting the passage by an interpolation, not only unwarranted by the *Hebrew text*, but by every translation of it extant. This method of interpreting scripture, not by scripture, but by our own prejudiced imaginations, is making the word of God to mean *any* thing and *every* thing which fancy may invent; and rendering it—instead of a *sure word of prophecy, to the which we do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place*, 2 Pet. i. 19.—a sort of *ignis fatuus*, by no means to be depended on for a director and guide, in so awful a concern as therein is proposed to every man to whom that word shall come.

The only shadow of excuse for such an interpretation, or rather *corruption* of the passages above mentioned, is the being able to produce some *positive law* against a man's *having more wives than one at a time*; and then, in order to make God's laws agree together, it may be thought reasonable to restrain the indefinite expression כִּי אִישׁ—*if a man*, in *Exodus* and *Deuteronomy*, to *unmarried men only*. But as the *first* is impossible, the *second* is without, and indeed against, all authority from the law of God; for that it allowed *polygamy*, is just as clear as that it allowed *marriage*. Therefore the consequence is, that the expression in question being *general*, without *limitation* or *exception* with respect to the situation of the man, as *married* or *unmarried*, it must in some cases command *polygamy*, and therefore make it a *duty*. This consequence must be *allowed*, if we let scrip-
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ture speak for itself ; it could not be avoided by any other means than a *man's* refraining entirely from the *other sex*, or, if he married, contenting himself with *one wife*. If a man went farther than this, he must take the consequence.—But as God would not suffer a *whore of the daughters of Israel*, so he made these laws to prevent their being exposed to prostitution by men's *taking* them, and then *putting them away*. This was just as likely to be the case where *married* men were concerned, as where *others* were ; therefore positively forbidden as to *both* alike.

That there were some ingredients in these laws, of the ceremonial, local, or temporary kind—as the payment of *the fifty shekels to the father*—we do not deny ; but that the *morality* of these laws must survive as long as *morality* itself exists, is as clear, as that exposing a woman to *prostitution* and *ruin* must at all times be equally hateful in the sight of God, and therefore at all times equally provided against by these humane and salutary laws.

In confirmation of what is here said, I would lay it down as a rule in all cases, that wherever a *moral* intendment appears to be involved in the words of a *ritual*, *ceremonial*, or *local* and *temporary* institution, there, though the *letter* of the law itself can have no place among us, yet the *spirit* and *moral intention* must survive as long as the world endures. For instance, it is written, *Deut. xxv. 4. Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.* By this we must suppose, that it

was

was the custom in *those days*, and in *that part* of the world, to lay the *sheaves on the floor*, and to get the *corn out by the treading or trampling of * oxen*. We get the corn out of the *sheaves by threshing with flails*; therefore the *letter* of the law above mentioned has nothing to do with us. But the *spirit* of this law being of a *moral* nature, and to teach us, that *those who labour in the word and doctrine* are to *live of their labours*, for that *the labourer is worthy of his reward*—this law is itself quoted by *St. Paul*, 1 Cor. ix. 9. 1 Tim. v. 18. as a proof that *they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel*. 1 Cor. ix. 14. From whence, as from other instances which might be mentioned, I infer, that though a *law itself*, or *some part* of it, may have vanished as to the *letter*, yet it *may*, or rather *must*, survive as to the *spirit* of it.

Shall we say, that we must construe the words—if *any man*—to mean *unmarried* men only, because, though God's laws do not forbid *polygamy*, yet *ours* do? To imagine that our laws are to controul the laws of God, is a blasphemous arrogance, in comparison of which, Cardinal *Wolsey's*—EGO ET REX MEUS—is *humility* itself in the very abstract. The law of the land is such, that a *married Englishman* cannot publicly and openly marry *the virgin he has seduced or taken*; he cannot

* *Kolben* tells us, that this practice is observed at the *Cape of Good Hope*, (vol. ii. p. 73) and adds—“ ’tis most certain, that corn is much more expeditiously got out of the ears by the treading of *horses* or *oxen*, than it is by *threshing*. A team of *eight horses* or *oxen* will tread out more corn in a few hours, than a dozen men can thresh out in a whole day.”

obey the *letter* therefore of these laws of God, as the *Jews* could have done; but he can and ought to make them the law of his conscience; and if he has *taken a virgin*, &c. he can, according to the *spirit* of these laws, *maintain, protect, and provide* for her, and, if he survives his present engagement, marry her publicly in preference to all other women upon earth.—Thus would one great end of this law be answered, and millions be preserved from destruction. If indeed the woman is profligate enough to forsake the man, and voluntarily unite herself with another, she is guilty of transgressing these laws of God, as in other cases of *adultery*: for, the same reason which is given why the man *shall not put her away all his days, viz. because he hath humbled her*, goes to what is also said of the woman—*she shall be his wife*—she certainly therefore *is his wife* in God's sight, and *whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent*. Prov. vi. 29.

I some time ago met with two sermons, which were preached, and afterwards printed, on occasion of passing the *marriage-act*. The learned author, speaking of *polygamy*, expresses himself as follows:—“We find like-
 “ wife in those early times, and afterwards,
 “ that *polygamy* was partly indulged, but
 “ only upon certain *typical* occasions, and
 “ then only among the *patriarchs* and some
 “ of the *kings*, who were all express types of
 “ CHRIST in their several marriages; and in
 “ this respect they each typified and pre-
 “ figured CHRIST's marrying the *Jewish*
 “ church,

“ church, and the several churches of the
 “ *Heathen* nations, which, under the gospel,
 “ were all designed to make but *one church* or
 “ *one spouse* ; therefore, under the gospel, *polygamy* ceases, and but *one wife* is allowed.”

If this author will examine his *Bible* a little more closely, he will find himself mistaken both in his *premises*, and in his *conclusion*. In the first place, it cannot be true that “ *polygamy* was partly indulged, only
 “ upon some typical occasions, and then only
 “ among the *patriarchs* and some of the
 “ *kings*.”—This appears from the law, Deut. xxi. 15. which was enacted after the *patriarchal* age had ceased, and many ages before there was a *king in Israel*. That law is framed in *general* terms, so as to include *any* and *every* man—that has *two wives* :—it does not say, if a *patriarch* or *king* hath *two wives*—but—
 וְאִם יִהְיֶה לְאִישׁ שְׁתֵּי נָשִׁים—literally—“ *if there be to a man*”—or—as we translate it—“ *if a man have—two wives*” See Taylor Concor. sub voc. הָיָה, N° 82. It is apparent, then, that the law being *general*, it was meant to regulate a *general* practice. It is also *untrue* in point of *fact*, that “ *polygamy*
 “ was partly indulged only to *patriarchs* and
 “ some of the *kings* ;” witness *Elkanah*, who was neither *patriarch* nor * *king*, but a *Le-*

* So it is said of *Gideon*—*He had seventy sons of his body begotten, for he had many wives*. Judg. viii. 30. Of *Jair*, he had thirty sons. Judg. ix. 4. *Ibzan* of *Bethlehem* had thirty sons and thirty daughters. Judg. xii. 9. *Abdon* had forty sons, ver. 14. These were neither *patriarchs* nor *kings*, but all *judges of Israel*, and must, by the numbers of their children, be concluded to have been *polygamists* as well as *Gideon*.

vite, descended from *Kobath*, the son of *Levi*, 1 Chron. vi. 27, 28 ; and yet we find, by his history, 1 Sam. i. 1, &c. that *polygamy* was *indulged* to him as evidently as to any *patriarch* or *king* that ever lived. From all which it appears, that our *author's* conclusion—
 “ therefore, under the *gospel*, *polygamy* ceases,
 “ and but *one wife* is allowed”—falls to the ground. But let us look back again to Deut. xxi. 15.—That law was evidently made to regulate the disposal of a man's *inheritance* who had *two wives*, and to prevent the *disinheritance* of the *first-born* through favour and affection towards the child who was not so, because born of the *favourite wife*. This could not concern the *patriarchs*, who had all been long dead—nor (immediately at least) the *kings*, who did not exist till near *four hundred* years afterwards—nor the *priests* and *Levites*, who could have *no inheritance* to dispose of. Numb. xviii. 20, 21. Deut. x. 9. xii. 12. latter part. Deut. xviii. 1, 2.—If then it did not concern the *people at large*, it was *nugatory*, for it concerned *nobody* at all.—This is surely a very sufficient proof that *polygamy* was an allowed practice of the *Jews* * in general.

* The modern *Jews* forbid *polygamy* among the people, and this from the authority of some passage in the *Talmud* ; but the reasons assigned to me, on discoursing with a learned *Jew* on this subject, were of the prudential kind ; such as the people in general being too *poor to maintain more than one wife*, the *quarrels it occasioned*, and the like.—I asked him if he looked upon it as forbidden by the law of God ?—“ No, God forbid,” replied he earnestly ; “ what then must be the case of *Abraham*,
 “ *Jacob*,

neral. The *all-wise* God cannot be supposed to enact so positive a law, if there were no persons who could be objects of it; and this law to regulate *certain circumstances* which did not exist; nor is it easy to imagine, that if those *circumstances* were *sinful*, they would not have been as explicitly *condemned*, as they are here plainly allowed and regulated. What has been observed above, concerning the law of *Deut. xxi. 15.* holds equally true of *Exod. xxi. 10.* which had as little to do with *patriarchs* and *kings* as the other had.

I cannot conclude this part of my subject without mentioning a case, which those would do well to consider, who confound *polygamy* with *adultery*, and plead the authority of the great and infallible *interpreter* of God's *mind* and *will* for so doing; I mean the case of *Abimelech*, King of *Gerar*; who, having already a *wife of his own*, sent and took *Sarah* the wife of *Abraham*, *Gen. xx. 2.* But God came to *Abimelech* in a dream by night, and said to him—Be-

“*Jacob, David, &c. ?*” He likewise told me, that this prohibition was “not *universal*, for that in some countries *polygamy* was still practised among the *Jews*.” He added, “that even *here*, if a *Jew* married a woman, and had no children by her, after *ten* years he might marry another wife.” So, where a man defiles a *virgin*, “*she shall be his wife*, agreeable to *Exod. xxii. 16.* and *Deut. xxii. 28, 29.*” I take the truth to be, that the *Jews*, as to the business of *polygamy*, usually conform to the custom of the country where they live. “As for the modern *Jews*,” says *Leo Mutinensis*, “those of them who live in the *East*, still keep up their antient practice of *polygamy*; whereas in *Germany* they are not allowed this privilege, and in *Italy* very rarely, and only in case a man hath lived *ten* years with his wife without issue.” See *Puffend.* book vi. ch. i. § 16.

bold,

*hold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken—for she is a man's wife. Here God plainly set forth His thoughts of adultery, or taking a man's wife; that it is a sin to be punished with death.—However, Abimelech had not actually defiled her, and shews that, if he had not been deceived by Abraham's saying that Sarah was his sister, he would not have taken her at all.—Said he not unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother. In the integrity of my heart, and innocency of my hands, have I done this. And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst it in the integrity of thine heart, for I also withheld thee from sinning against Me, therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. The sin of adultery is certainly marked very strongly, but here was a fair opportunity to have as strongly marked polygamy, if that was a sin also. How could Abimelech, having a wife, ver. 17, take any other woman innocently? and yet God allows this to have been done, in his answer to the plea of Abimelech. Though he was innocent as to an intentional adultery, being ignorant that Sarah was Abraham's wife, yet Abimelech must know that he had a wife of his own, and therefore could not innocently, and in the integrity of his heart, take any other woman of any kind, if polygamy was a sin. But supposing this poor * heathen was ignorant, and*

* “ It appears by this whole history of Abimelech, that he was a man of great virtue in those days; not an idolater, but a worshipper of the true God, as Melchizedek, the high-priest of that country, was.” Patrick on Gen. xx. 7.

therefore

therefore said this knowing no better, yet God could not be ignorant of His own mind and will, when he said—*Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thine heart, for I also withheld thee from sinning against Me.* Rather, why did he not say—“Thou wicked wretch, how canst thou dare to talk of the
 “innocency of thine hands, and of the integrity
 “of thine heart?—supposing thou didst not
 “know Sarah to be another man’s wife, yet
 “the taking any woman, as thou hast already
 “a wife of thine own, is against the law of
 “marriage, and therefore a mortal sin.” Instead of this, God allows his plea, and the moment *Abimelech* restored Sarah to her husband, God graciously removes every mark of his displeasure, ver. 17, 18. So ABRAHAM †
 prayed

† Who was himself at that hour a *polygamist*. See Gen. xvi. 3, 4. It is likewise to be observed, that *Abraham* was a *Christian* believer, as much so as *Paul* was, who tells us, *the gospel was preached to Abraham*—that he believed it—was justified by faith—and that they which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham, who is (spiritually) the father of all believers in CHRIST. Comp. Rom. iv. 16, &c. with Gal. iii. 9, 14. and John viii. 56. *Abraham* would have been exceedingly puzzled, to have found out what the gospel which was preached to him (and in which he believed and rejoiced) had to do with polygamy, or to have accounted for the possibility of the children of his faith, in future ages, finding out that it was the same thing with adultery; when *Abraham’s* own eyes and ears were witnesses of there being put as great a difference between polygamy and adultery, as could possibly exist between any two things in creation; and this, by the determination of that God, who afterwards gave the law to *Moses* at *Mount Sinai*—and who bore testimony concerning *Abraham*—that he had obeyed His voice—kept His CHARGE—His COMMANDMENTS—His STATUTES—and His LAWS. See Gen. xxvi. 5.—But how is this
 consistent

*prayed unto GOD, and GOD healed ABIME-
LECH, and his wife, and his maid-servants—*
וַאֲמֵהֶתִּי (which seem to have stood in the
same relation to *Abimelech*, as the אֲמָה—*Hagar*
(See Gen. xxi. 10. Comp. Judges viii. 31.
with ix. 18.) did to *Abram*, chap. xvi. 3, 4.)
*and they bare children—*וִילָדוּ—*pepererunt*,
Mont.—*they brought forth: for the LORD had*
fast closed up all the wombs of the house of ABI-
MELECH, because of SARAH, ABRAHAM'S
wife. It should seem by the context, that
GOD had withheld Abimelech from sinning against
Him, in a criminal access to Sarah, by inflict-
ing a judicial disability of some kind upon him;
also, to mark the more strongly His holy in-
digination against him, for taking another
man's wife, He rendered Abimelech's wife, then
great with child, (as also such of his maid-
servants, who it should seem, from what is
said, ver. 17, 18, were probably his concubines,
and some of them also great with child) una-
ble to bring forth—but when Sarah was re-
stored, Abimelech was restored to his own wo-
men, and they to him.—All this by the im-
mediate hand of GOD.

I would only say, that any person who can
attentively consider the several circumstances
of this history of the divine interposition, and
talk of the sinfulness of *polygamy* in the sight
of GOD, even putting it on the same footing
with *adultery*, will appear to differ very

consistent with *truth*, if *Abraham's polygamy* was an
open and continued violation of GOD's *primary law of*
marriage? or if, as *St. Ambrose* speaks—he was living
in *adultery?*

widely,

widely, in his judgment of the matter, from this authentic record of the *mind* and *will* of the MOST HIGH.

How early an abhorrence of the sin of *adultery* was impressed on the minds of men, and of the *punishment* which awaited it, may likewise be gathered from the history of *Isaac* and *Abimelech* king of *Gerar*, which is recorded Gen. xxvi. particularly at ver. 10, 11.

It is to be remarked also, that throughout the whole scripture, the same approbation; many like circumstances which evidenced that approbation; also, like *answers to prayer*, and like *miracles*, in token of that approbation, attended equally on a *second*, or *after-taken* wife, under a *polygamous* contract, as on a *first* or *only* wife. This may be said to be uniformly the case, as may appear from the following

P A R A D I G M.

Sarai was barren—she had no child—Gen. xi. 30.

And *Abram* said, LORD GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?—Behold to me thou hast given no seed.—And He brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now towards heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them; and He said unto him—So shall thy seed be. Gen. xv. 2, 3, 5.

And GOD said unto *Abraham*, As for *Sarah* thy wife, I will bless her, and give thee

And *Sarai* said unto *Abram*, Go in unto my maid; and she gave *Hagar* to her husband *Abram* to be his wife. And he went in unto *Hagar*, and she conceived—and the angel of the LORD said, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. Gen. xvi. 2, 4, 10. Yea,

GOD said, As for *Ishmael*, behold I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful,

thee a son of her. Yea I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her. Gen. xvii. 15, 16.

GOD said — *Sarah* thy wife shall indeed bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name *Isaac*. Gen. xvii. 19.

And *Sarah* conceived and bare *Abraham* a son in his old age—and *Abraham* called his name *Isaac*. Gen. xxi. 2, 3.

Isaac was forty years old when he took *Rebekah* to wife—and *Isaac* intreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD was intreated of him, and *Rebekah* his wife conceived. Gen. xxv. 20, 21.

Manoah's wife was barren and bare not; and the angel of the LORD appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold, now thou art barren and barest not, but thou shalt conceive and bear a son—and the woman bare a son, and called his name *Samson*; and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him. Judg. xiii. 2, 3, 24.

fruitful, and multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. Gen. xvii. 20.

And the angel of the LORD said unto *Hagar*, Behold thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name *Ishmael*.

And *Hagar* bare *Abram* a son, and *Abram* called his son's name, which *Hagar* bare, *Ishmael*. Gen. xvi. 11, 15.

Jacob took *Leah* and *Rachel*—but *Rachel* was barren. Gen. xxix. 31. And she gave him *Bilhah* her handmaid to wife; and *Jacob* went in unto her; and *Bilhah* conceived and bare *Jacob* a son. And *Rachel* said, God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son. Gen. xxx. 4, 5, 6.

And *Bilhah*, *Rachel's* maid, conceived again, and bare *Jacob* a second son, and *Rachel* said, נפתולי אלהים “By the “agency (Heb. twistings) “of the *Aleim* I am in- “twisted with my sister— “i. e. my family is now “interwoven with my sister's, and has a chance “of producing the promised seed.” See Park. Heb. Lex. פתל.

When *Leah* saw that she had left off bearing—she took *Zilpah* her maid, and gave

gave her to *Jacob* to wife.
And *Zilpah*, *Leah's* maid,
bare *Jacob* a son.

And *Zilpah*, *Leah's* maid,
bare *Jacob* a second son.

And *Leah* said - Happy
am I, for the daughters
will call me blessed.

And GOD hearkened un-
to *Leah*, and she conceived
and bare *Jacob* a fifth son.
And *Leah* said, GOD hath
given me my hire, *because I*
have given my maiden to mine
husband. And GOD remem-
bered *Rachel*, and GOD
hearkened to her, and opened
her womb, and she conceived
and bare a son, and said,
GOD hath taken away my
reproach. And she called
his name *Joseph*, and said,
The LORD shall add to me
another son. Gen. xxx. 24.
See also Gen. xxxv. 9—12.

There was a certain man
of *Ramathaim Zophim* (a
Levite of the family of the
Kohathites, see 1 Chron. vi.
33, 34, &c.) and his name
was *Elkanah*. And he had
two wives—the name of one
was *Hannah*—and of the
other *Peninnah*.—*Peninnah*
had children; *Hannah* had
no children—the LORD had
shut up her womb.—And
her adversary also provoked,
her sore for to make her
fret, because the LORD had
shut up her womb. And
she was in bitterness of
soul, and prayed unto the
LORD, and wept sore—and
she

From henceforth all ge-
nerations shall call me
blessed. V. M. Luke i. 48.

There was a certain priest
named *Zacharias*, and his
wife's name was *Elizabeth*
—and they had no child,
because *Elizabeth* was bar-
ren, and they both were
well stricken in years. And
the angel said unto him,
Fear not, *Zacharias*, for thy
prayer is heard, and thy
wife shall bear thee a son,
and thou shalt call his
name *John*—and he shall
be great in the sight of the
LORD, &c. And his wife
Elizabeth conceived, and
said—Thus hath the LORD
dealt with me in the days
wherein he looked on me to
take

take away my reproach among men. And she brought forth a son, and his name was called *John*, &c. Luke i. 5, 7, 13, 25, &c.

she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of Hosts, if thou wilt indeed look upon the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man-child, I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life—&c. Then *Eli* (the *high-priest*) answered, and said—Go in peace, and the GOD of *Israel* grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of Him, &c. Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about, after *Hannah* had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name *Samuel*, saying, Because I have *asked* him of the LORD, &c. And *Hannah* said — For this child I *prayed*, and the LORD hath given me my petition that I *asked* of Him. 1 Sam. i. 1, &c. See also chap. ii. 20, 21, 26.

Song of the Virgin Mary.

My soul doth magnify the LORD, and my spirit hath rejoiced in GOD my Saviour.

For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden.

He that is mighty hath done to me great things, and holy is his name.

And

Hannah's Song.

Mine heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD, my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies, because I rejoice in thy salvation.

There is none holy as the LORD.

He

And His mercy is on them that fear Him from generation to generation.

He hath shewed strength with His arm, He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and hath exalted them of low degree.

He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away.

He hath holpen His servant *Israel*, in remembrance of his mercy, &c.

He will keep the feet of His saints.

The bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girt with strength—the wicked shall be silent in darkness.

The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces—the LORD maketh poor and maketh rich, He bringeth low and lifteth up.

They that are full have hired themselves out for bread, and they that were hungry ceased.

He shall give strength unto His king, and exalt the horn of His anointed.

The conclusion of all which appears to be, that either we do not worship the same God which the *Jews* did, or the God we worship doth not disallow nor * disapprove *polygamy*. Miraculous blessings bestowed of God, in answer to the prayers of people living in open breach of His law, are totally contradictory to the whole scripture-character of God. *The way of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is His delight.* Prov. xv. 9. *He that turneth away his*

* To say that He once did not disallow or disapprove it, but that He has *changed His mind* upon the subject—is one of those assertions which are diametrically opposite to the attribute of *unchangeableness*, so strongly marked out in scripture, and which is, and must be, of the very *essence* of an ALL-PERFECT BEING.

ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination. Prov. xxviii. 9. Comp. Ps. lxvi. 18, 19, 20.

In what has been said on the subject of this *chapter* on *poygamy*, I should think arguments enough have been brought to prove that it was *not sinful* in the sight of God, under the Old Testament, and that the *bles-sed* God, by *becoming man* (1 Cor. xv. 47.) and condescending to appear on earth for us men, and for our salvation, *in the likeness of sinful flesh*, Rom. viii. 3; *made of a woman made under the law*, Gal. iv. 4; *came not to destroy the law*, by lessening the security which it was evidently made to afford the *weaker sex* against the *stronger*. That the *treachery* which was so positively forbidden, and so amply provided against, among the *Jews*, should be *allowed* to *Christians* (who are *children* of the same *Heavenly Father*, *sub-jects* of the same *Almighty King*) and even *commanded* them in some cases, is a monstrous supposition!—repugnant to the positive institution of God, *They shall be one flesh*—contradictory to all *sound reason*—and abhorrent from every *generous, honourable, and humane* principle. Whatever the *situation* of the *man* may be, the danger arising to the *woman* from the consequences of *seduction* and *dereliction* is *equal*, therefore *equally* provided against by the law of God.

How *polygamy* became reprobated in the *Christian church* is easily accounted for, when we consider how early the reprobation of

marriage itself began to appear. The *Gnostics*, whom *Epiphanius* derives from *Simon Magus*, condemned *marriage* in the most shocking terms, saying that it was “*of the Devil* ;” but this was to support themselves in their horrible tenet, that “*all women should be common amongst them*.” Better people soon afterwards condemned marriage as *unlawful to Christians*, and this under a wild notion of greater *purity* and *perfection*, in keeping from all intercourse with the other sex. This opinion divided itself into many sects, and gave great trouble to the *church* before it was discountenanced. Still *second marriages* were held *infamous*, and called no better than *lawful whoredom*. Nay, they were not ashamed to write, that, “*a man’s first wife being dead, it was adultery, and not marriage, to take another*.” Amidst all this, *polygamy* must necessarily receive the severest *anathema*—for if it could be supposed *unlawful for Christians* to marry *at all*, and then so detestable to marry a *second time*, after the death of a wife, the having *two at once* must be, *a fortiori*, accounted more horrible than all the rest. All these several opinions had texts of scripture pressed into their service, by the *ingenious zeal* of their several abettors : the Old Testament was of no authority in the matter ; the New Testament was made to *speak* what it did not *mean*, concerning what it *does* mention ; and construed so as to condemn what, when rightly understood, it *does not* mention. The two

first of these conceits about marriage have been long exploded, except with respect to the *Romish clergy*, who, to this hour, are *forbidden to marry*. But *polygamy* throughout the *Christian church*, the *western* part of it at least, is looked upon as a sin against the *seventh* commandment, though there is not a syllable in the *whole Bible* which makes it so. When I mention *polygamy*, I would always be understood to mean on the *man's side*, for on the *side of the woman*, the whole scripture shews it to be a *capital offence*.

Why this distinction should be made, He best knows who made it; but, in part, we may suppose, from the consequences attending on *one side*, which cannot be on *the other*; these are finely touched by the strong and masterly pen of the *son of Sirach*—*Ecclus* xxiii. 22, 23. Having spoken of the *adulterer*, he saith, (agreeably to Lev. xx. 10.) *This man shall be punished in the streets of the city*, (see also *Deut.* xxii. 24.) *and where he suspecteth not he shall be taken*. He then proceeds—*Thus shall it go also with the wife that leaveth her husband, and bringeth in an heir by another*—For, first—*she hath disobeyed the law of the Most High*—secondly—*she hath trespassed against her own husband*—and thirdly—*she hath played the whore in adultery, and brought children by another man*. *She shall be brought out into the congregation, and inquisition shall be made of her children*.—*Her children shall not take root, and her branches shall bring no fruit*. *She shall leave her memory to be*

be cursed, and her reproach shall not be blotted out. Though these be the words of an *apocryphal* writer, they deserve the highest regard, because they are exactly consonant with the law of God. But it is very extraordinary, that in a discourse against *fornicators, whoremongers, and adulterers* (which commences, ver. 16. and is continued to ver. 26. inclusive) not a word should be said against *polygamists*, if *polygamy* were a sin as much on the *man's* side as on the *woman's*.—He most likely would not have passed it over in silence had there been *any law* against it.

His description of the *adulteress* is very fine, and the aggravations of her offence, by bringing forth a spurious issue, strongly marked; but they are such as cannot exist on the man's side, and therefore hence, in part at least, arises the difference.

What he says of the *adulterer* is also remarkably striking, and evidently taken from *Job xxiv. 15.* We lose much of its propriety, from our mis-translation of 'Ο ἄνθρωπος παραβαινων ἀπο της κλινης αὐτου—*A man that breaketh wedlock*, we call it; but this is not a translation of the words—they literally are—the man who transgresseth from out of his bed—like the murderer, *Job xxiv. 14. who, rising with the light, is in the night as a thief—*So the *adulterer*. Saith *Job*—the eye of the *adulterer* waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see me, and disguiseth his face. The son of *Sirach* represents the *adulterer* as “leaving his bed, stealing out of it, as it
T 3 “ were,

“ were, to execute his plans of wickedness,
 “ at a time when he thinks the unseasonable-
 “ ness of the hour, and the darkness of the
 “ night, will conceal him from the eyes of
 “ all.” This man is, in *Job*, called זָנוּ—*an adulterer, or defiler of other men’s wives.*—That the same character is meant by the son of *Sirach*, is evident, from comparing *Ecclus* xxiii. 18. with *Job* xxiv. 15; and the punishment said to await him, *Ecclus* xxiii. 21. with that assigned to *adulterers*, *Lev.* xx. 10. *Deut.* xxii. 22, 24.

Another reason of the difference, that is to say, why *polygamy* should be allowed to the *man*, and no such liberty belong to the *woman*, arises also from the *inferiority* evidently stamped upon the *woman* by the *God of nature*, by whom she is placed under the absolute *power* of *her husband*, so that she cannot dispose of her *person*, on any occasion, or to any purpose whatsoever, to any other but to himself, as may appear from *Gen.* iii. 16. She is not at liberty to make any *contract* whatsoever, without her *husband’s* consent—even *religious vows* are utterly void; she cannot *perform* them if the *husband* disagreeeth thereto. *Numb.* xxx. 8. *The wife* is—ὑποτασσόμενη τῷ ἰδίῳ ἀνδρὶ—*subjected to her own proper husband*, 1 *Pet.* iii. 1. The apostle *Paul* uses the same expression, when he says, *Rom.* xiii. 1. *Let every soul be subjected* (ὑποτασσέσθω) *to the higher powers.* But none of these things are said on the *side* of the *man*—even in teaching in the *congregation*, the *apostle* marks out the *woman’s inferiority*—1 *Tim.* ii. 11. *Let the woman learn*

in silence with all subjection—I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. Again, the same apostle saith—The head of the woman is the man—the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man; neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man. 1 Cor. xi. 3, 8, 9. It appears then from the *nature of things*, as constituted by the Creator himself, that the *man* hath powers which the *woman* hath not, and therefore may use a freedom of action which the * woman cannot. The apostle's saying, *the man was not created for the woman, but the woman for the man*, reminds me of the manner in which CHRIST vindicated his disciples, when they were accused by the *Pharisees* of breaking the sabbath, because *they plucked some ears of corn on the sabbath-day—He said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath, wherefore the Son of Man is LORD also of the sabbath.* The reader may transfer this argument, by parity of reason, to the other subject which we have been speaking of; and it furnishes a proof, by no means inconclusive, why a *man* may be a *polygamist*, but a *woman* not.

But we may go farther, and observe, that

* Besides all this, it may be said, that the more wives a man hath, the more children he is likely to have; but this cannot be on the woman's side; for she cannot breed the oftner by having more men than one.—Such a mixture is known to be even destructive of *conception*, so that the more men a woman may have, the less likely is she to breed at all. This surely affords a strong proof that *polyandry* (as it is called) is contrary to nature.

without *this* difference, the grand ends of GOD's moral government, with respect to the commerce of the sexes, would not have been provided for. The very laws themselves, which were made to secure *those* ends on *both* sides, must have become mere cyphers. If polygamy had been permitted on the woman's side, what must become of that law—Deut. xxii. 22. If a man (כִּי אִישׁ—if any man whatsoever) be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman. So thou shalt put away evil from ISRAEL? If the having more wives than one at a time had been forbidden the man, what, in numberless instances, must have become of Deut. xxii. 28, 29. If a man (כִּי אִישׁ as before—if any man whatsoever) find a damsel that is a virgin which is not betrothed—and lie with her—she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days? The first of these laws (as that of Lev. xx. 10.) was apparently to secure the man against the treachery of the woman—the second (as Exod. xxii. 16.) to secure the woman against the treachery of the man—and both to secure the world from that confusion and mischief which must be brought upon it (and are daily brought upon it by our disregard of these laws) by the treachery of either.

As the woman had the business of *parturition* allotted to her, she must necessarily be looked upon as the *repository* of those bonds and cements of human society, without which

it

it cannot * subsist; such as family descents, pedigrees, genealogies, inheritances, and all communications and distinctions of relationship. Therefore the *Creator* did, in his infinite wisdom, set bounds to the *commerce of the sexes*, on the part of the *woman*, which could not be passed under pain of death.

Whoredom and *fornication* are, for the same reasons, also inimical to those *bonds* of human society above-mentioned, introductory of all manner of confusion and wickedness, incon-

* The *rabbinical* explanation of the word *אֶחָד*—in *Exod. xx. 14.* has something very striking in it. *R. Levi* saith, that “this word, absolutely and simply, denotes
“ *congress with the wife of another man.* Nor is it used
“ but where a *married woman* is concerned. The reason
“ of this precept is, that the world should be peopled
“ agreeably to the will of God. The blessed God
“ willed, that all creatures of the world should bring
“ forth fruit according to their respective species, and
“ that one species should not be mixed nor confounded
“ with another. He willed that the same should obtain
“ with respect to the human offspring, that it might ap-
“ pear whose child every man was, and that the seed of
“ *one* should not be confounded with that of *another.*
“ Moreover, many corruptions are found in *adultery*,
“ which occasion the breach of many commandments.
“ God commanded to *honour parents*; but in case of
“ *adultery* they cannot be known. So we are forbidden
“ any intercourse of marriage with *sisters*, and *other rela-*
“ *tives*; but *adultery* tends to destroy these laws; for,
“ where this is, men cannot know their own relations.”
Thus speak the *Rabbins*, agreeably to the scriptures, and matter of fact, therefore are worth attending to in this point. The *reader* must surely see, very evidently, reasons for the *seventh* commandment on the *woman's* side, which cannot apply on the *man's*, and why *adultery*, or *defiling a man's wife*, was made so *penal* to both *parties* concerned.

sistent with the law of marriage, and the probable causes of ruin and destruction to the *female sex*.—Therefore, as *seduction* and *dereliction* must, in the very nature of things, lead to these, the positive law of God forbids *any man* to take a *virgin*, and then abandon her.

As to what has been said touching the harmony of the *Old* and *New Testaments*, and the perpetual obligation of the *moral law* as to its *immutability*, so that what it once *forbad* it always *forbids*, and what it did *not forbid* can never be *forbidden*—it is a point of such infinite consequence, as to deserve a recapitulation—and as I cannot sum up the matter in words more clear and forcible, than our *church* has done in her seventh *article*, I will introduce the conclusion of this *chapter* with that sound and scriptural account of the matter:—

“ The *Old Testament* is not contrary to the
 “ *New*; for both in the *Old* and *New*
 “ *Testament* everlasting life is offered to
 “ mankind by CHRIST, who is the only
 “ mediator between GOD and man.
 “ Wherefore they are not to be heard,
 “ which feign that the *old fathers* did
 “ only look for *temporary* promises.
 “ Although the law of GOD, given from
 “ GOD by *Moses*, as touching *ceremonies*
 “ and *rites*, do not bind *Christian men*;
 “ nor the *civil* precepts thereof ought,
 “ of necessity, to be received into any
 “ commonwealth—yet, notwithstanding,
 “ no *Christian* man whatsoever is
 “ free

“ free from the obedience of the com-
 “ mandments which are called *moral*.”

No one can consider aright the *divine institution of marriage*, and not see that it is founded in the very *nature of things*, and that by the God of nature. This is as self-evident, as that if mankind were to *increase and multiply, and replenish the earth*, there must be an appointed means by which this was to be brought to pass. Therefore the laws concerning *marriage* cannot be reckoned a mere object of those *rites and ceremonies* which were to *vanish away*. Heb. viii. 13.

Nor can they be reckoned among the objects of that *civil polity*, which was only calculated for the government of a *particular* people, in a *particular* part of the world, and that under *particular* circumstances, such as never were or can be known to any other people on the earth—unless *marriage* itself can be supposed to be confined to them, and not equally to concern the whole human race.

The *moral* law hath therefore *marriage* as its object, as concerning, in the highest and most material points, the *moral* actions of men. This clearly appears, not only from the very nature of the thing itself, but from the very words of the *seventh* commandment—*Thou shalt not commit adultery*; and again of the *tenth*—*Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife*. These are *moral* laws, equally binding at *all times*—in *all places*—over *all persons*. And as the *seventh* commandment is a *moral*
 law

law founded on the divine institution of *marriage itself*, so are all the expositions of it which are to be found in the scripture, unless we can be absurd enough to imagine, that the *letter* of a law can be of a *moral* nature, and that the sense, meaning, and intendment of it are only of a *ceremonial* or *civil* tendency.

What is meant by the word נָאָם—*adultery*, is not to be determined by the conceits, inventions, customs, or laws of men, but by the mind and will of GOD, as revealed to us in the *precepts* and *examples* which are recorded in *His word* for our instruction; and especially from the uniform and unvaried idea annexed to the use of that word throughout the writings of *Moses* and the *prophets*. If these have failed in giving us the true sense of it, then is it not true that their writings are *profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction* (ἐπανορθωσις — the amendment of what is wrong) for *instruction in righteousness*, so that *the man of God* (i. e. the believer) *might be perfect, thoroughly furnished* (both as to *knowledge* and *practice*—nothing less can be the sense of ἀπτός) *unto all good works*, 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. The scriptures which are spoken of in this passage are the scriptures of the Old Testament, or *those holy scriptures* which TIMOTHY had known from a child—before a single line of the New Testament was written, ver. 15. If therefore *polygamy* does not stand recorded as a *sin* against the law of GOD, either by *Moses* or the *prophets*, but as a matter
owned,

owned, blessed, allowed of GOD, we must say, unless we pretend to be wise above what is written, that it is *no sin*, for *sin is the transgression of the law*. As to the common notion, that it was made sinful by some *new law* of CHRIST, and absolutely forbidden in the New Testament, it is one of the *three pious*
 * *lyes* which owed their invention to the ignorant zeal of some professors and writers in the very early ages of *Christianity*. One was
 “ —that marriage was a carnal thing, incon-
 “ sistent with the purity and perfection of

* “ It was a maxim avowed in the 4th century, that
 “ —it is an *act of virtue to deceive and lye, when, by that*
 “ *means, the interests of the church might be promoted.*—
 “ This horrible maxim was indeed of long standing,
 “ and had been adopted for some ages past, to the un-
 “ speakable detriment of that glorious cause in which
 “ they were employed. And it must be frankly con-
 “ fessed, that the greatest men, and most eminent saints,
 “ were more or less tainted with this corrupt prin-
 “ ciple. We would willingly except *Ambrose* and
 “ *Hilary, Austin, Gregory Nazianzen, and Jerome*; but
 “ TRUTH, which is more respectable than these venera-
 “ ble fathers, obliges us to involve them in the general
 “ accusation.” See *Mosheim*, vol. i. p. 200.

“ Though the primitive *Christians* (says *Moyle*) lived
 “ up to the full rules of their religion with the utmost
 “ probity and innocence of manners, yet it is too cer-
 “ tain, there were some persons among them, who,
 “ through a mistaken zeal, made no scruple of *lying* for
 “ the sake of their religion. Their fictions found an
 “ easy reception in a credulous age, and were conveyed
 “ down to posterity as certain truths.” See *Fortin*,
Rem. vol. i. p. 299.

Du Pin owns, that *St. Hilary* seems to think “ a lye
 “ necessary upon some occasions.” Vol. ii. p. 76.

“ a *Christian*,

“ a *Christian*, and therefore ‡ unlawful under
 “ the gospel.”—Another was—that “ if a
 “ man, on the death of his wife, married
 “ again, it was no better than *adultery*.”—
 The *third*, begotten between the other two,
 was—that “ *polygamy*, though allowed to the
 “ *Jews* under the Old Testament, is forbid-
 “ den to *Christians* under the *New*.” The
 two first (among the *Protestants* at least) *are*
come to nought—the *last* is as generally be-
 lieved among *Christians* of all sorts, as the
 lye of *transubstantiation* is in the *Romish*
church. And there can be little doubt, but
 that a man who has *two wives*, under what-
 ever circumstances they might be taken,
 would be looked upon to be as *impious*, and
 as much a *child of the devil*, among us, as a
 person would be among the *Papists*, who
wickedly refused to give up his outward sen-
 ses, and to believe that a small piece of *wafer*,
 after certain words said over it by a *priest*, is
 the body, flesh, blood, and bones, of a man
 six feet high—or as a *priest*, *bishop*, or *pope*,
 who married at all.

As these things will be farther considered
 under the head of *Superstition*, I will now

‡ *Epiphanius*, Hæres. 58, speaks of the *Valesians*, who
 castrated themselves, and also their *guests*, that by this
 means they might introduce them into the kingdom of
 “ heaven—“ *Se & hospites suos castrârunt, ut ita secum*
 “ *introducèrent in regnum cælorum.*”—They held that
 “ none but *eunuchs* could be saved.

Nisi quis eunuchus fieret, salvâri non posse.

hasten

hasten to the examination of a *notion*, which I fear is *too common* among us, and on which what is usually said and thought on the subject of *polygamy*, is for the most part built ; I mean that of representing CHRIST as appearing in the world, as “ a *new lawgiver*, “ who was to introduce a *more pure and perfect* “ *system of morality*, than that of the *law which* “ *was given by MOSES.*”—This horrible blasphemy against the *holiness* and *perfection* of GOD’S law, as well as against the truth of CHRIST, who declared that *He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it*—this utter contradiction both of the *law* and the *gospel*—was the foundation on which the heretic *Socinus* built all his other abominable errors. From whence he had it, will appear in the sequel. In the mean time, I cannot help stopping a while to lament the progress which *Socinianism* is daily making among us—with many, among the *Dissenters* especially, it is called *new light*—but, thank GOD ! there are yet some remaining, who call it by its true name—*old darkness*—and as such oppose it.—As it is coincident with the main subject of the following *chapter*, it will fall in my way to say something, which I hope will thoroughly apprise the *reader* of the mischiefs which must result from *Socinianism* in all its shapes.—In the course of what I shall have to say, it will appear, that, so far from CHRIST’S ever condemning *polygamy*, which, as a *new lawgiver*, he is supposed to have done, He never mentioned it during the *whole course of*

His
the Law came by Moses

but Grace and Truth by Jesus Christ

His ministry, but lest that, as He did all other *moral* actions of men, upon the footing of that law under which *He was made*, and to which He, for *us men*, and for *our salvation*, became not only *subject*, but even *obedient unto death*. Phil. ii. 8.

Upon the whole, I take the truth to be, that the first *general institution of marriage*, accompanied with the first *general blessing*, is to be found in those words of Gen. i. 28, *Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth*.—The special manner of this, together with the indissolubility of the obligation created by it between the parties, is revealed, Gen. ii. 24. where it is said—*A man shall be joined*—קָבַץ—προσκολληθήσεται—agglutinated erit—to *his woman*—and *they*, as in consequence thereof, *shall become one flesh*, i. e. *inseparable* from each other. Gen. iii. 16. reveals the entire subordination and subjection of the *wife to the husband*—and the rest of the Bible shews us, that *virgins* could not be *seduced*, and *taken as appetite might prompt*, and then abandoned and forsaken as licentiousness might incline—but that *monogamous* and *polygamous* contracts were equally valid and binding, equally lawful as to the inheritableness of the issue, and all other marks of legitimacy, that is to say, on the *man's* side ; but that, on the *woman's*, polygamy was, for the most apparently-wise reasons, forbidden under pain of death.

While this system was revered and observed, we read of no *adultery*, *whoredom*, and *common prostitution* of women among the *daughters*

ters of Israel: no brothels, street-walking, * venereal disease: NO CHILD-MURDER, and those other appendages of female ruin, which are too horrid to particularize. Nor were these things possible, which, since the revocation of the divine system, and the establishment of human systems, are become inevitable. The supposing our *blessed Saviour* came to destroy the *divine law*, or alter it with respect to marriage, is to suppose Him laying a foundation for the misery and destruction of the weaker sex; whereas no *being* less wicked than *Satan* himself, could ever have devised the almost total departure from GOD'S LAW, which, from even the earliest ages of *the church*, since the Apostles' times, is to be found among the *Christians*.

I now put an end to this long chapter, in which *polygamy*, divested of all the nonsense of human reasonings, is set in its true *scriptural* light, as not *sinful in itself*, but, in some cases, highly *expedient*—in others—*duty*; and

* Much has been said concerning the antiquity of this disease. The subject is ably handled, and indeed exhausted, in that learned and laborious work of *Johannes Astruc*, de Morb. Ven. lib. i. I will only here observe, that as the *divine law* punished *adultery*, or the defilement of another's wife, with death in both parties—and *whoredom* was, on the part of the woman, also a *capital offence*—the consequences of *prostitution* must of course be prevented, by the prevention of the thing itself. Besides, the almost universality of marriage among the *Jews* (for *celibacy* was a disgrace) and the fixing the *virgin* on the man who first *took her*, so that he could not *put her away all his days*, left little room for *prostitution*, had their laws been even less severe against it.

in this last view of it, forming one *link* in that divine chain of *heavenly legislation*, on which the security and protection of the *weaker sex* is suspended; it being, upon the footing of God's law, as highly criminal for *one man* as *another*, to *seduce* and abandon to prostitution and ruin, those who have a most indefeasible claim upon him for their safety and support.

If among us, as among the *Jews*, and as formerly in *France*, and now in some other parts of the world, a *single man*, be his rank and station what they may, was constrained to * marry publicly the woman he seduces; and if the *spirit* of the *divine law* was so far complied with, as to compel the *man already married*, to give security for the maintenance and provision of such woman as he seduces, and, if his present *engagement* shall determine, to *marry publicly* her whom, in God's account, he has *married privately*—it would be such a check upon the licentiousness of mankind—

* In the book for the reformation of the *ecclesiastical laws*, in the time of *Edward VI.* it was proposed, “that those who corrupted *virgins*, were to be *excommunicated* if they did not *marry* them, or, if that could not be done, they were to give them the third part of their goods, besides other arbitrary punishments.” See Burnet, *Hist. Ref.* vol. ii. p. 198. This, and many other salutary proposals, fell to the ground by the death of that excellent young *Prince, Edward VI.*—Had *Queen Elizabeth* paid attention enough to the mischiefs accruing to her sex from the want of some such regulation, to have had it passed into a *law*, it might justly have been reckoned one of the glories of her reign.

such a restraint upon what is called *gallantry*—such a security for female chastity—and such a preservative against *prostitution*, as might make those who live to see it say—

Jam redit & virgo, redeunt Saturnia Regna.

VIRG.

Now *Justice* and the *Golden Age* again return.

Doubtless, *irregularities* there always were, and always will be, while *human nature* is *human nature*. Still, a vast difference there must be found, between a *system* which is formed as a check to the lust, treachery, and cruelty of mankind, and *one* which, in *numberless* instances, lets them loose to act without controul.

APPENDIX TO CHAP. IV.

SINCE the preceding *chapter* went to the press, the *author* has been favoured with a transcript from a tract in the *British Museum*, which contains the whole of * *Bishop Burnet's* opinion on *polygamy*. The *reader* has before seen it partially quoted; but the whole is here inserted *verbatim*.

“ IS *polygamy* in any case *lawful* under the
“ *gospel*?

“ For ANSWER. It is to be *considered*, that
“ *marriage* is a *contract* founded upon the *laws*

* *Bishop Berkely* thought *polygamy* agreeable to the *law of nature*. See *Lond. Mag.* for *June* 1754, p. 267.

“ *of nature*, its end being the *propagation of*
 “ *mankind* ; and the *formality* of doing it by
 “ *churchmen*, is only a supervenient benedic-
 “ *tion*, or pompous solemnizing of it ; and
 “ therefore the *nature of marriage*, and not
 “ any *form* used in the celebration of it, is to
 “ be *considered*. It is true, the case is harder,
 “ when any is married by such a † *form*, as
 “ binds

† The *Bishop* here doubtless alludes to that part of our *form*, where the priest is to ask the man—“ Wilt thou
 “ have this woman to thy wedded wife—&c.—and,
 “ forsaking all other, keep thee *only unto her*, so long as
 “ ye both shall live ?

“ *The man shall answer,*
 “ I WILL.”

Here is no *decent* qualification, as in the *ordination* of ministers—“ I will endeavour so to do, the LORD being
 “ my helper”—“ I trust so”—“ I think so”—“ I have
 “ so determined, by GOD’s grace”—or the like ; but,
 with the peremptoriness and confidence of a *Stoic*, who
 held—ἐφ’ ἡμῖν ἔστιν ὅσα ἡμετέρα ἔργα—“ *all our own actions*
 “ *are in our own power*”—ill suited to a frail and fallible
 creature, who knows *not what a day may bring forth*—
 (see *Prov.* xxvii. 1. comp. *Jer.* x. 23.) the *answer* is to
 be—I WILL—I—REX DOMINUSQUE MEI—I WILL.

The man is afterwards to take her—“ *for better and*
 “ *for worse*”—but, be she ever so much *worse* than he
 took her for, short of actual *adultery*, still he is to groan
 under the fore bondage of what is called HIS VOW ; which
 his fellow-creatures have just as much right to impose
 upon him, from any authority in scripture, as another
 set of people had, to make a man *vow* voluntary *poverty*—
 perpetual *chastity*—and implicit *obedience* to a fellow-mor-
 tal—on becoming a *monk*.

There was a time when, if *such a one* had married, the
law (see 31 Hen. VIII. c. 14.) would have sent him to
 the gallows, and no doubt the *church* would have sent him
 to the devil. TEMPORA MUTANTUR—well if we could
 say—as touching *all* the foolish and unscriptural *snares*,
 which

“ binds him to one *woman*, than where he is
 “ bound only by the *tie of marriage*, con-
 “ ceived in *general terms*.

“ The *case* of mankind, since the *fall*, varies
 “ very much from what it was in *innocence* ;
 “ for then the soundness of their *bodies*, and
 “ purity of their minds, did keep out of the
 “ way all the hazards of *barrenness*, *sickness*,
 “ *uncleanness*, or *crossness* of *humours*, which
 “ made the former law not so proper for
 “ mankind ; yet still a *single* marriage was the
 “ perfecter, as being * nearer the original.

“ Before the flood, we find *Lamech* a poly-
 “ gamist ; such were *Abraham* and *Jacob* af-
 “ ter it ; not that this was not indulged by
 “ *Moses* ; for all that he did relating to these
 “ affairs, was only to allow a DIVORCE, which
 “ was a *proviso* for the hardness of the hearts
 “ of the *Israelites*. Every man was bound to
 “ maintain whom he had first married ; lest,
 “ therefore, such as designed another wife,
 “ and could not maintain a *former*, might
 “ use *indirect* ways to be rid of them, this
 “ *fair one of divorce* was allowed † by GOD ;
 “ and

which mankind have invented, and laid for one another's
 consciences—ET NOS MUTAMUR IN ILLIS. We may
 observe that the aforesaid *vow*, exacted by the *priest* in
 the marriage ceremony, is a *corruption* of Gen. ii. 24.
 —*Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and*
shall cleave unto his wife.

* See *Burnet* on the Articles of the Church of *England*,
 3d edit. fol. p. 288.

† I just take the liberty to observe, that it is best to
 keep to the expression of scripture. Our BLESSED SA-
 VIOUR doth not say, that GOD *allowed divorce*—but—*Mo-*

“ and their *polygamy* was practised, without
 “ either *allowance* or *controul*, as the *natural*
 “ *privilege* of mankind. Neither is it any
 “ where marked among the *blemishes* of the
 “ patriarchs; David’s wives, and store of
 “ them he had, are termed by the prophet,
 “ God’s gift to him: yea, *polygamy* was made
 “ in *some cases* a duty by *Moses’s* law;—when
 “ any died without issue, his brother, or
 “ nearest *kinsman*, was to marry his wife, for
 “ raising up seed to him; and all were
 “ obliged to obey this, under the *hazard* of
 “ *infamy*, if they refused it; neither is there
 “ any exceptions made for *such as were mar-*
 “ *ried*. From whence I may *faithfully* con-
 “ clude, that what God made *necessary* in
 “ some cases to any degree, can in *no case* be
 “ *sinful in itself*; since God is *holy in all His*
 “ *ways*.

“ But it is now to be examined, if it is
 “ *forbidden* by the gospel. It is certain, that
 “ our LORD designed to raise mankind to the
 “ highest degrees of purity and chastity; and
 “ therefore our LORD and St. PAUL do pre-
 “ fer a *single life* to a married state †, as that
 “ which qualifies us for the kingdom of
 “ heaven, and was loaded with the fewest

ses allowed or permitted it;—so the Bishop expresses him-
 self a few lines higher.

† “ This was meant only with respect to *particular*
 “ persons in *particular* circumstances, such as an *apostle*;
 “ which is the reason why St. Paul applies it chiefly to
 “ himself.” 1 Cor. vii.

“ *incumbrances*;

“ incumbrances ; and by this rule, a *single*
 “ marriage being next to none at all, was
 “ certainly more suitable to the *gospel*,”
 [he means the times of the *gospel*.] “ But a
 “ simple and express *discharge* of *polygamy* is
 “ no where to be found.

“ It is true, our LORD discharges *divorces*,
 “ except in the case of *adultery*; adding, that
 “ whosoever *puts away his wife* upon any
 “ other account, commits *adultery* : so St.
 “ *Luke* and St. *Matthew* in one place have it
 “ —or *commits adultery against her* : so St.
 “ *Mark* has it—or *causes her to commit adul-*
 “ *tery* : so St. *Matthew* in another place.

“ ‘ If it be *adultery* then to take another
 “ ‘ woman after an *unjust divorce*, it will fol-
 “ ‘ low that the *wife* has *that right* over the
 “ ‘ husband’s body, that he must *touch no*
 “ ‘ other.’—This is indeed *plausible*, and it is
 “ *all that can be brought from the New Testa-*
 “ *ment*, which seems convincing ; yet it will
 “ *not be found of weight*.

“ For it is to be considered, that if our
 “ LORD had been to *antiquate polygamy*, it be-
 “ ing so deeply rooted in the men of that
 “ age, confirmed by such fashions and *unques-*
 “ *tioned* precedents, and riveted by so long
 “ a practice, he must have done it *plainly* and
 “ *authoritatively*, and not in such an involved
 “ manner, as to be *sought* out of his words by
 “ the *search* of *logick*.

“ Neither are these *dark words* made more
 “ clear by any of the *apostles* in their *writings* :
 “ words are to be carried no farther, than

“ the *design* upon which they were written
 “ will lead them to ; so that our LORD be-
 “ ing, in that place, to strike out divorce so
 “ *explicitly*, we must not, by a *consequence*,
 “ condemn *polygamy*; since it seems *not to*
 “ *have fallen within the scope* of what our
 “ LORD does there disapprove.

“ Beside, the term *adultery* may be taken
 “ in general, for such a *breach* of *wedlock* as
 “ is equivalent to *adultery*; and such is an
 “ *unjust divorce*. This may be the impor-
 “ tance of the phrase used by St. *Mark*, viz.
 “ —*he committeth adultery against her*; or all
 “ may be better explained by the phrase St.
 “ *Matthew* uses about it, in one place—*he*
 “ *causes her to commit adultery*; since he that
 “ *exposeth* or *tempteth* to sin, shares in *the*
 “ *guilt* with the person that succumbs: and
 “ from this it appears, that *polygamy* is not
 “ declared *adultery*, neither in the place cited,
 “ nor any other that I know of.

“ ‘ But it is true that *polygamy* falls short
“ ‘ of the intendment of marriage, in *inno-*
“ ‘ *cency*, to which state, we that are *under*
“ ‘ *the gospel* must return *as near as it is pos-*
“ ‘ *sible.*’ —It is to be confessed that *polygamy*
“ was much condemned by the ancients,
“ though I think I have met with something
“ about it, that is little noticed ; but of that
“ I can adventure to say nothing at this
“ † distance from my books and papers.

“ But

‡ How unfairly *Dean Delaney* represents this passage in the *Bishop's* paper, may be seen before, p. where we

“ But all that being granted, it is to be
 “ considered that the *antients* were *unjust* and
 “ *severe* against *marriage* (itself), and did ex-
 “ cessively favour the *celibate*, or single (life);
 “ so that in some places, they who married a
 “ *second* time, were put to do *penance* for it;
 “ and, indeed, both *Jew* and *Gentile* had run
 “ into such *excess* by their free commixtures,
 “ that it is no wonder if the holy men of
 “ those ages, being provoked to a just zeal,
 “ against such unjust practices, must have
 “ been carried, through immoderate swaying
 “ of the counterpoize, into some extremes on
 “ the *other hand*.

“ Therefore, to conclude this *short answer*,
 “ wherein many things are hinted, which
 “ might have been enlarged into a volume, I
 “ see nothing so strong against *polygamy*, as
 “ to balance the *great* and visible *imminent*
 “ hazards that hang over so many *thousands*,
 “ if it be not *allowed*.”

The *author* cannot help expressing the
 highest satisfaction in finding, that in what
 he has written on the subject, he has had
 the honour of coinciding in so many points,

we are to suppose his *Lordship* making “ the best excuse
 “ he could, for giving a *rash opinion*—whereas, he seems
 to give the circumstance of being at “ a distance from
 “ his books and papers,” as a reason for not producing
 testimonies from the *antients* “ little noticed,” but which,
 if produced, would tend to shew, that some of them
 thought as his *Lordship* did upon the subject.

with

with the sentiments of this learned, judicious, and excellent *Bishop*. But, on the other hand, he must express his sorrow, that his *Lordship* was so far “distant from his books and papers,” otherwise, it is most probable, that he would have produced some valuable testimonies from the *antients*, concerning what he hints at as—“*little noticed*.”

Another thing is also to be lamented, which is, that the good *Bishop* did not proceed to explain what he meant by those “great and visible imminent hazards,” mentioned in the last paragraph.

If so small and inconsiderable a person as myself may venture to guess at the meaning of so considerable and great a man as *Bishop Burnet*, I should suppose, that his *Lordship* has here a reference to his observation before made, concerning the difference between the state of *innocency*, and that of mankind since the *fall*, and to those *evils* which he mentions as the consequences of the *latter*—which could not exist during the *former*. Such as “*barrenness, sickness, uncleanness, or crossness of humour*.” What “great, imminent, and visible hazards hang over *thousands*,” from these causes, has been observed before, p.

To vindicate, therefore, the lawfulness of *polygamy* is, as the world is now constituted, in *such cases* at least, to act as a good *citizen of the world*, by vindicating the “natural privileges,” and necessary *rights* of mankind; and it is, at the same time, to act

act as a sincere believer of *divine revelation*, to set forth, openly and without disguise, that HEAVENLY SYSTEM, by which those *rights* are established and secured. To vindicate also that *universal law*, which had the good of the WHOLE for its object—to shew that its *wisdom* and *beneficence* are too VAST to be confined to a *single people*, or a single period of *particular dispensation*—to free it from that obscurity which *monks* and *priests*, and other *enthusiasts* and *fanatics*, have involved it in, to the distress and destruction of millions—is a task reserved *alone* for those, who, for the sake of *truth*, are willing to sacrifice their ease and *reputation* to the malevolence of *ignorance* and *prejudice*.

C H A P. V.

CHRIST *not the Giver of a new Law.*

MOSHEIM (Eccl. Hist. *Macclaine's* edit. quarto, vol. i. p. 295) very justly observes—" When once the *ministers* of the
 " *church* had departed from the antient simplicity of religion, abuses were daily multiplied; and *superstition* drew, from its
 " horrid fecundity, an incredible number of
 " absurdities, which were added to the doctrine of CHRIST and his apostles."—This is very true, and very strikingly exemplified in that learned and accurate writer's history of the *Christian church*, both with regard to *ceremonies* and *doctrines*. Among other absurdities in point of *doctrine*, is the notion that " CHRIST's mission upon earth, was to
 " exhibit to mortals a *new law*, distinguished
 " from all others by its unblemished *sanctity*
 " and *perfection*." In vol. ii. p. 277, this is represented as one main article of the *Socinian* creed, and it is to be wished that it never had been adopted but by the immediate followers of *Socinus*. Yet this is the language we hear daily, and is at the bottom of that extravagant notion expressed by *Gronovius* on *Grotius de Jure*, tom. i. p. 274, octavo, 1735 —maintained

tained by many learned men, and even adopted as an axiom by the generality of Christians, as much as the *Pope's* supremacy and infallibility were before the *Reformation*—namely, that —“ *Lex naturæ & veteris fœderis concedunt* “ *polygamiam*”—*The law of * nature and of the*
“ *Old*

* By *lex naturæ*, or *law of nature*, I understand, for my own part, as far as I can make sense of the expression, or reconcile it to *truth*, that *lex non scripta*, or *unwritten law*, given of GOD to *Adam*, and from him derived by *tradition* to the people of GOD till the time of *Moses*, when the *lex scripta*, or *written law*, was given by *Moses*. See *John* i. 17. *former part*, and *Rom.* v. 13. Both these *laws* are in substance *one* and the *same*. The *moral obligation* of *each* demanded the *same obedience*; the *ceremonial institutions* of *both* pointed out the *same sacrifice* and *atonement* for *sin*. Neither of these *laws* forbade *polygamy*, therefore it was practised by *Abraham—Jacob*, and doubtless many others who lived under what is called the *patriarchal dispensation*—as well as by the *Jews* under the *Mosaical dispensation*. As for what is generally understood by the *law of nature*, the offspring of what is called the *light of nature*, or the *mores communes naturali rationi consentanei*—GROT—by which I suppose we are to understand—“ *Common rules of moral action*, which are consonant to every man's *natural reason*”—thus making men their own *lawgivers*, as to what is *morally good* and *evil*; this, notwithstanding all the learned *lumber* that has been written upon the subject, is a definition not unlike that of the state of *Israel*, when they had no *king*, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes. *Judges* xvii. 6. A *law of nature*, which is to spring from, and be agreeable to every man's *natural reason* in this *corrupted state*, is a ridiculous *chimæra*, that may bear as many forms as there are men in the world.—It is *Atheism* at bottom (for there is but ONE LAWGIVER—compare *Is.* xxxiii. 22. *James* iv. 12.) and is best described by—

Monstrum, horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum.

Let

“ *Old Testament, allow polygamy, but it is forbidden—*“ *Lege CHRISTI*”—*by the law of CHRIST.* This appears to be the opinion of *Grotius* in that place on which *Gronovius* comments : for he says—“ *Ex CHRISTI lege irritum est conjugium cum eo qui maritus sit*
 “ *alterius mulieris; ob jus illud quod CHRIS-*
 “ *TUS fœminæ pudicitiam fervanti dedit in*
 “ *maritum.*”—*By the law of CHRIST, a marriage with a man who is the husband of another woman, is void and of none effect, by reason of the right which CHRIST gave to the woman, who preserves her chastity, over her husband.* Here then *CHRIST* is set up to exhibit to mortals a *new law*, and that, in opposition to *the law of nature*, and of the *Old Testament*, as

Let those who think I carry this matter too far, consult *Rom. i. 21, &c.* which passage of *holy writ* may be looked upon as a summary of what is said in the *Old Testament*, of the depravity, blindness, ignorance, and wickedness of the *fallen human nature*. This is abundantly confirmed by all history, and daily experience. *Dr. Alexander*, *Hist. of Wom.* vol. i. p. 169, says, very truly—“ *Man, in that rude and uncultivated state in*
 “ *which he originally appears in all countries, before*
 “ *he has been formed by society, and instructed by ex-*
 “ *perience, is an animal, differing but little from the*
 “ *wild beasts that surround him.*” Here let me once more recommend to the reader’s perusal, *Dr. LELAND’S Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation*. There he will see a very authentic account of what *MAN* is,
 “ *though formed by society, and instructed by expe-*
 “ *rience,*” without the *light of divine revelation*. This, not as it respects the *vulgar and illiterate*, but those also who are handed down to us, as most eminent for *wisdom, learning, and philosophy*. — *THE WORLD BY WISDOM KNEW NOT GOD, 1 Cor. i. 21. Comp. Job xi. 7, 8.*

Gronovius

Gronovius expresses it. How this idea harmonizes with the *heresy* of *Socinus*, may appear from the short view which we have of the *Socinian theology*, *Mosh.* vol. ii. p. 276.—

“ GOD, who is infinitely more perfect than
 “ man, though of a similar nature in some
 “ respects, exerted an act of that power by
 “ which He governs all things, in consequence of which an extraordinary person
 “ was born of the *Virgin Mary*. That person was JESUS CHRIST, whom God first
 “ translated to heaven, and having instructed
 “ Him fully there in the knowledge of His
 “ will, counsels, and designs, sent Him again
 “ into this sublunary world to promulgate to
 “ mankind a *new rule of life, more excellent*
 “ *than that under which they had formerly*
 “ *lived*, to propagate the truth by His ministry, and to confirm it by His death.”

Thus blasphemed *Socinus* against the excellence, purity, and perfection of the law of JEHOVAH, as well as against the glory and divinity of the *Son of God*! However, this notion about a *new law* given by CHRIST, is not * to be called the invention of *Socinus*, who

* *Eusebius*, the famous bishop of *Cæsarea*, one of the most learned *Greek* writers of the 4th century, whose eminent talents and acquisitions were accompanied by many errors and defects (see *Mosheim*, *Eccl. Hist.* vol. i. p. 286—7) says, in *Demonst. Evang.* lib. i. c. 1. that
 “ the law of *Moses* was given only to the *Jewish* nation,
 “ and that only while it remained in its own country :”
 from whence he infers, “ ΟΤΙ ΔΙΑ ΤΕΤΟ ΕΤΕΡΟ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΑ ΚΑΘ’
 “ ΕΤΕΡΟ ΝΟΜΟ ΠΡΟΣΕΔΕΙΧΘΕΝ.” “ That on this account there
 “ was

who lived so late as the 16th century; it was a doctrine of the *Koran*, when the impostor * *Mahomet* set up his religion; for we are there informed, that, “ of 224,000 *prophets* “ which have from time to time been sent “ into the world—among whom 313 were “ *apostles*, sent with special commissions to “ reclaim mankind from infidelity and su- “ perstition—*six* of them brought *new laws* “ for that purpose, which successively abro- “ gated the preceding. These were, 1. *Adam*; “ 2. *Noah*, 3. *Abraham*, 4. *Moses*, 5. *Jesus*, “ 6 *Mahomet*.” See Broughton, Hist. Lib. tit. *Mohammed*.

It was fundamentally necessary for *Mahomet*'s plan, to have it believed that God had sent several prophets into the world; who had successively abrogated the laws of those who had gone before: for as *Mahomet*'s intention was to appear as such an one himself, he very artfully kept his followers from looking after the credentials of his mission in the writings of the *Old* and *New Testaments*; for had he appealed to these himself, or referred his followers to *their* evidence of his mission from ~~God~~, He must have appeared as great an-

“ was a necessity for *another prophet*, and *another law*.” See *Barbeyrac*, Fr. notes on *Grot. de Jure*. liv. i. c. 1. § 16. note 1.

* Earlier still—“ *Lactantius* considers *CHRIST*'s mission as having *no other* end, than that of leading mankind to virtue, by the most *sublime precepts*, and the “ most *perfect example*.” *Mosheim*, vol. i. 188, note h, century 4th.

impostor

impostor in their eyes, as doubtless he was in his * own.

The *blessed Jesus* proved the reality of His mission, by a course directly contrary to this, for, in all His *teaching*, He constantly appealed to the *law* and the *prophets*—"It is *written*," was His warrant for all He said and did—He founded all His claim to the character of the MESSIAH, on the writings of the † Old Testament, and all His *miracles* were a constant appeal to what was there foretold concerning him. So far from assuming to Himself the authority of abrogating that holy, perfect, and spiritual *rule of life*, which was contained in the law given from God by *Moses*, He began His public ministry with the most solemn protest against such a supposition. Therefore, to contend for his enacting any *new law*, contrary to the *law of nature*, and of the *Old Testament*, is to call in question His veracity, and to place Him in a rank of *imposture* even below *Mahomet* himself. *Mahomet* professed ‡ to re-
form,

* *Mahomet* was too cunning not to be sensible of this. Therefore he got rid of all danger from their authorities, by making it believed that the *pentateuch*, *psalms*, and *gospels* were so altered and corrupted, that little credit was to be given to them—That God had promised to take care of the *Koran*, and to preserve it from any *addition* or *diminution*. *Koran*, c. 15.

† So His fore-runner, *John the Baptist*, appealed to the Old Testament for the truth of his mission. See Matt. iii. 3. Luke iii. 4—6, with John. i. 22, 23.

‡ This adventurous impostor declared publicly, that he was commissioned by God to destroy *Polytheism* and
VOL. I. X *Idolatry*.

form, but in truth to destroy, the *law and the prophets*, as they had destroyed all *preceding systems*: whereas CHRIST most solemnly declared—that *heaven and earth* could sooner pass, than one jot or tittle pass from the law—*Think not*, said He, *that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.* So far from abrogating the law, or rule of life, which had been delivered by the hand of Moses, or setting up a new law in opposition to it—He came into the world to be subject to it in all things, and so to fulfil the *whole righteousness* of it. Matt. iii. 15. *To magnify and make it honourable.* Is. xlii. 21. *even by His obedience unto death.* Speaking in the spirit of prophecy (Ps. xl. 8.) He says—*Lo—I come—in the volume of the book it is written of me—I delight to do thy will, O my GOD; yea, THY LAW is within my heart.* And in His public ministry, how uniformly doth he speak the same thing? How does He disclaim the imputation of abrogating the law of GOD, and of setting up any new law of His own, in opposition to it? *He whom GOD hath sent*, said He, *speaketh the words of GOD.* John iii. 34.—*My doctrine is not MINE, but His that sent me.*

Idolatry, and then to reform, first the religion of the *Arabians*, and afterwards the *Jewish* and *Christian* worship. For these purposes he delivered a new law, which is known by the name of *The Koran*, or *Alcoran*, &c. Mosheim, Part i. c. 2. § 2. Cent. 7.—*Mahomet* calls *Jesus* the *Reformer of the Law of Moses.* See *Turkish Spy*, vol. ii. p. 116. edit. 1691.

John vii. 16, 17.—*If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of GOD, or whether I speak of MYSELF.*

John viii. 28.—*I do nothing of MYSELF, but as my Father hath taught me I speak these things.*

John xii. 49, 50.—*I have not spoken of MYSELF, but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak. My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work.*

John iv. 34.—*This is not the language of one who came to abrogate GOD's law, as delivered by Moses, and to set up a new law of His own, contrary to the rule of life revealed in the Old Testament, but of one who came to fulfil the righteousness of the law, every precept of which He revered, whose every commandment He perfectly obeyed.*

Let the reader turn to his *Bible*, and consider what is said of the law of GOD—Ps. xix. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and throughout the whole long 119th *Psalms*, and surely he must say, that the idea of a more *excellent law*, or *rule of life*, than is therein set forth, is as replete with *folly*, as it is with *blasphemy*. The same testimony which the Old Testament bears to the *perfection* of the *divine law*, is also borne in the New Testament. When CHRIST delivers that summary of it, *Mark* xii. 30, 31, under the two heads of *the love of GOD with all the heart*—and *the love of our neighbour as of ourselves*—He says—*There is NONE OTHER commandment greater than these.* So Paul,

(Rom. vii. 12.) *The law is holy, and the commandment holy—just—and good.* And again (ver. 14.) *The law is spiritual.—Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O LORD, saith the Psalmist, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.* Ps. cxliii. 2.—*For by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight, saith the apostle, Rom. iii. 20.* And again, Rom. iii. 19. *Whatsoever things THE LAW saith, it saith to them, that are under THE LAW, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before GOD.* After all this, to talk of “a more excellent law—a more pure and perfect rule of life,” goes beyond folly, it borders upon madness.

But as *madness* is usually allowed to be so far consistent with itself, as to *argue right*, though from *wrong principles*, we must observe that this scheme of abrogating the *old law*, and of introducing a *new one*, was a necessary and consistent part of the Socinian plan—to suffer a *rule of life* to remain, which, from its *purity and holiness*, concluded all men under *sin, and condemnation*, so that no *flesh could be justified by it*—and, at the same time, to deny the necessity of a *vicarious satisfaction and atonement* (which is the very marrow of the Socinian heresy)—was to render the salvation of man *impossible*. Socinus, therefore, to establish a consistent plan, abrogates the *divine law* as delivered by *Moses*, by which man cannot be saved, and introduces a *new law* (called the *law of CHRIST*) by which he might

might be saved. This made way for the rest of the * *Socinian* scheme, so that the divinity of CHRIST's person—His *vicarious obedience*—*sufferings*—*atonement*—and *satisfaction*—being rendered unnecessary, were all struck out of the *Socinian gospel*. Thus the pride of fallen man's reason, or rather the reasonings of his pride, are made to triumph over the wisdom of GOD. But as in all wickedness there is *folly*, so in this; for if no man *could be justified* by a law *less excellent, pure, and perfect*, how could he be saved by one that is *more so*? This has been seen by the *Socinians*; therefore—*sincerity* is their gospel obedience, and if they fail here (as fail they must) a *sincere desire to obey* will serve the turn.—Thus ends the *Socinian*, with the *Mahometan*, in the destruction both of the *law and the gospel*: and CHRIST, like *Mahomet*, is to annihilate *Moses* and the *prophets*!

If we attend to our *Saviour's* preaching, and especially to that heavenly discourse delivered from the *Mount*, we shall find Him a most zealous advocate for the law of GOD, as delivered by *Moses*. We shall find Him stripping it of the false glosses, by which the Jewish *rabbies* had obscured or perverted its

* The *Turkish Spy*, Vol. ii. Lett. 15. writing to the *Musti* concerning different *Christian* sects, says, "There is a sect which they call *Socinians*, who seem to preach out of the very book of glory, (i. e. the *Alcoran*) denying the divinity of *Jesus* the son of *Mary*, the *Christian's Messiah*; even as our divine *Law-giver* does, in several chapters and verses of the *Alcoran*."

meaning, and restoring it to that purity and spirituality by which it reacheth even to *the thoughts and intents of the heart*. For instance, when He is about to enter upon a faithful exposition of the *moral law*, lest his hearers should imagine, that what he was about to say, was contrary to the law of the Old Testament, being so different from the teaching of the *Scribes and Pharisees*, He prefaces his discourse with those remarkable works—Matt. v. 17—20. *Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets, I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil; for verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall not pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.* So far from abrogating the old rule of life delivered from God by Moses, no one single part of it, not a sentence—a word—a letter—a bit of a letter, was to be destroyed. *Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.* What commandments were these? The sequel shews that they were the commandments of the *moral law*, or *rule of life*, delivered from God by Moses. For except *your righteousness* (or conformity to those commandments, which ought to be *internal and spiritual*) exceed the *righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees* (which was merely *outward and formal*) ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. He then enters upon an

an exposition of the *sixth* commandment, which He vindicates from the bare, outward, literal construction, received by *old tradition*, and taught by the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*—*Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment—but I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say—Thou fool—shall be in danger of hell-fire.—This—“ I say unto you” —does not imply that CHRIST meant to abrogate God’s law against murder, and to set up a new law of His own instead thereof—but to shew the people, that what they had been taught by the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, after the *tradition of the elders*, namely, to look upon the *sixth* commandment as reaching only to the *outward act* of murder, was false, for that, in the *spiritual* view and intendment of *that law*, it forbade every temper which resembled it, or could lead to it; such as violent, causeless, unprovoked anger, or any malicious inclination of the heart, breaking forth and shewing itself in opprobrious and injurious language; these are as contrary to the *law of the second table—Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself—in their nature and tendency, as murder itself.* So 1 John iii. 15. *He that hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.**

CHRIST then proceeds to explain the *seventh* commandment. *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, that, whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart.* This—"but I say unto you"—does not imply that CHRIST meant to repeal the *seventh* commandment, but to explain it, as he had done the *sixth*, and to shew that it not only meant to forbid the act of defiling another's wife (*γυναικα*) but even indulging in the heart an *evil desire* towards her. Whereas the Scribes and Pharisees, after the tradition of the elders, stuck to the outward letter, and taught, that nothing but the outward act was a breach of this law. What our LORD said here was no new commandment, but what was implied in the *tenth* commandment—*Thou shalt not covet (lust after) thy neighbour's wife.* So Prov. xxiv. 9. *The thought of foolishness is sin.*

Again. *Ye have heard that it has been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the LORD thine oaths. But I say unto you, Swear not at all, neither by heaven, for it is GOD's throne, nor by the earth, for it is His footstool, &c.—but let your communication be yea, yea, and nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.* OUR LORD, by His—"but I say unto you"—doth not enact any new law, but explains and restores the honour of the *third* commandment—*Thou shalt not take the*
name

name of the LORD thy GOD in vain. This evidently forbids all vain and rash swearing, and the use of God's holy name (לשוא) *in vain, to no purpose*, in men's communication with each other. Even swearing by the *creatures*, is an interpretative breach of this commandment; for, as OUR LORD shews, there is no *creature* but hath some *relation* to God.

Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you, that ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also, &c. This refers to *Exod. xxi. 24*, where the law of *retaliation* was enacted, to be administered by the *judges of Israel* in a judicial way, on the lawful conviction of offenders: but the *Jews*, who were taught to abuse every thing, made this a rule of proceeding in their own *private acts of revenge* upon one another. Such a temper and disposition as this was very *sinful* to indulge, much more so to gratify; OUR LORD therefore checks this, by teaching patience and forbearance, and doing good to, rather than injuring, *their enemies*. But still here is no *new law*, the Old Testament taught the same. *Exod. xxiii. 4, 5.* *If thou meet thine enemy's ass or his ox going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldst forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him.*—*Prov. xxiv. 17.* *Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth, lest the LORD see it,*
and

and it displease Him.—Prov. xxv. 21. *If thine enemy * hunger, give him bread to eat; if he be thirsty, give him water to drink.*—Lev. xix. 17, 18. *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart—thou shalt not † avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. I am the LORD.* All this is but saying what CHRIST says in other words.—This doctrine is enforced by *example*, as well as taught by *precept*, in the Old Testament. See 1 Sam. xxiv. 17, 18, 19, with Pf. vii. 4. But what a bright example have we, of rewarding *evil with good*, in the character of *Joseph*? Gen. xlv. &c.

Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn thou not away. This is the very language of Deut. xv. 7, 8, 10.

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy: they certainly had heard such a doctrine from the Scribes and Pharisees, but it was false; the law said, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour*, but

* We find the prophet *Elisha* preaching this very doctrine to the king of *Israel*, with respect to his enemies the *Syrians*, who were captivated at *Samaria*, during the war with the kings of *Syria*. See 2 Kings vi. 22.

† Mr. *Bate*, on this place, well observes,—“ It is
“ wonderful, that they, who read these commandments,
“ can talk of the spirit of the law’s differing from that of
“ the gospel, as if the SPIRIT OF GOD could differ from
“ HIMSELF, and the same love were not required of the
“ Jew as is of the Christian; when, on the love of GOD
“ and our neighbour, hang all the law and the prophets,
“ according to both the Old and New Testament.”

in no part of it, *Thou shalt hate thine enemy*—directly the contrary, Lev. xix. 18. Yet what numbers of people are there, that believe it did allow *hatred to enemies*, and that the *forgiveness* of them, and *doing them good*, was never known till CHRIST preached it! The apostle tells us—*Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.* Rom. xiii. 10. What law is meant, appears ver. 8, 9; not a new law of CHRIST, but the old law delivered from GOD by Moses. As there is but one lawgiver (James iv. 12.) so there is but one law*.

More instances of the truth above contended for might be adduced, but I will refer the reader to but one more on this part of the subject, wherein, if CHRIST could ever have had the least intention of abrogating the *old rule of life*, given from GOD by Moses, and setting up a new one of his own, he had a fair opportunity of declaring it.—Matt. xix. 16. One came unto him, and said, Good master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? He said unto him, If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto Him, Which? JESUS said, Thou shalt do no murder—thou shalt not commit adultery—thou shalt not steal—thou shalt not bear

* Nothing can be clearer upon this point, than our SAVIOUR's summary of all He had been saying on the subject of relative duties, throughout the whole of His divine discourse. Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for—THIS IS THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS.

false

false witness—honour thy father and thy mother—and—thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto Him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? JESUS said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me. The use which I would make of this scripture, is to shew that every necessary requisite for *entering into life*, as far as the *second table* of the law is concerned, is here set down—but we find not a syllable of any *new law*, or one *jot or tittle* subtracted from the *old*. Comp. Luke x. 25—28. The *old law* is repeated word for word, and summed up in its spiritual sense and import in the last sentence, which occurs in the Old Testament in just the same words. See Lev. xix. 18. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*—The proof which our LORD required of this man's *sincerity*, that of *giving to the poor*, was as much a duty under the Old Testament as under the *new*. See Deut. xv. 7—11, and Ps. xli. 1. The following CHRIST was so far from being a *new law*, that it was the *only way to heaven* which God ever revealed since *the fall of man*. Comp. Deut. xviii. 15, with Acts iii. 22, 23, 24, and Matt. xvii. 5.

But it hath been urged, that CHRIST declared Himself to introduce a *new law*, John xiii. 34. where He saith, *A new commandment give I unto you.* The context runs thus: *A new commandment give I unto you, that ye*
love

love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.—By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another. It surely cannot be meant, that, by the term “new commandment,” we are to understand the introduction of some law totally new in itself, as to the matter of it, without evident inconsistency, and absolute contradiction: for OUR LORD says, Matt. xxii. 39, 40. To love our neighbour as ourselves, is one of the two great commandments, on which hang ALL THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS. And St. John speaks of our loving one another, as an old commandment which we had from the beginning. Comp. 1 John ii. 7, 8. with 2 John v. 6. St. Paul saith, Rom. xiii. 8. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another—he that loveth another fulfilleth the law. For this—thou shalt not commit adultery—thou shalt not kill—thou shalt not bear false witness—thou shalt not covet—and if there be any OTHER COMMANDMENT, it is briefly comprehended in this saying—Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore LOVE IS THE FULFILLING OF THE LAW. Comp. 2 John 5, 6. So James ii. 8. If ye fulfil the ROYAL LAW (νόμον βασιλικόν) ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURE, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself (See Lev. xix. 18.) ye do well. But if ye have respect to persons (See Lev. xix. 15. Prov. xxiv. 23. xxviii. 21.) ye commit sin, and are convinced (ελεγχόμενοι, convicted) OF THE LAW as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole

whole law, and yet offend in one point (or instance—ἐν εἰ) is guilty of all—i. e. “He is
 “as truly a sinner, and as truly subject to
 “punishment, though not so severely, as if
 “he had actually been guilty of all possible
 “transgression against God’s laws.” See
Parkhurst’s Gr. & Eng. Lex. sub voc. ενοχος.
 For *He that said, Do not commit adultery*; said
also, Do not kill. Now, if thou commit no adul-
tery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgres-
sor of the law, ver. 11.—i. e. by offending
against the authority of the LAWGIVER.
 Whether in one or more instances this be
 done, the *whole law*, considered as one en-
 tire rule of obedience, is violated, and the of-
 fender of course liable to punishment. Comp.
Gal. iii. 10. See a very sensible paraphrase on
James ii. 8—12. in *Guyse’s Paraphrase on the*
New Testament.

St. *James* addresses this epistle to the be-
 lieving *Jews*, but holds forth no other rule
 of obedience to them, than the ROYAL LAW
 delivered from God to *Moses*, and recorded
 in the Old Testament. For the perfect *law*
of liberty, see chap. i. 25. and chap. ii. 12.
 See *Guyse’s Paraphrase on the New Testa-*
ment, note on *James i. 25.* and on *Rom. iii. 27.*

Demonstration cannot be clearer, if these
 passages be duly considered, that CHRIST
 could not mean, by a *new commandment*, one
 that had never before existed, but to establish
 the *old commandment* among His disciples, not
 only on the footing of its *general* obligation as
 they were *men*, but also on that *special* consider-
 ation

ation of their relation to *Him*, and to one another as His disciples, so as, if need were, to *lay down their lives for each other*. The enforcing this by a new † *example*—on new obligations, on new motives—seems to be the meaning of CHRIST's calling the *law of brotherly love* a new commandment. So his disciple *John*, (1 *John* iii. 14.) *We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren;* and ver. 16. *Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.* Something like this intense affection we read of in the Old Testament. From what other motive could *Moses* speak, when he said, on the behalf of his offending brethren (*Exod.* xxxii. 32.) *Oh this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold! (ver. 31.) yet now, if Thou wilt, forgive their sin, and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.* See also 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 17, where *David* pleads with God for the people, when he saw the angel that smote them, and said — *I have sinned, I have done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house.* How were both these great men eminent types of the good Shepherd, who laid down His life for the sheep! *John* x. 11. Here we may also observe the amiable and affectionate conduct of *Abigail*,

† Which may be inferred from the words—"as I have loved you."

when,

when, on the behalf of her churlish husband *Nabal*, she ventured forth to meet the angry *David*, and *his men*, 1 Sam. xxv. 18, 22, 23, taking *his* fault upon *herself*. Upon ME, said she, *my lord, let this iniquity be, and let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine audience, and bear the words of thine handmaid*: then follows, to ver. 32. one of the most *noble*, though *simple* instances of the perfection and persuasiveness of eloquence that we meet with, even in the *sacred writings*: one would almost think that *Virgil* had this transaction and that of *David's* in his view, when he wrote the speech of *Nisus* to the *Rutulians*, on the behalf of *Euryalus*, as much as that he had the prophecy of *Isaiab* before him, when he wrote his *Pollio*.

*Me, Me, adsum qui feci, in Me convertite ferrum ;
O Rutuli, mea fraus omnis ; nihil iste, nec ausus
Nec potuit.—Cælum hoc & conscia Sydera testor.
Tantum infelicem nimium dilexit amicum.*

“ Me, Me, he cry’d, turn all your swords alone
“ On me ; the fact confess’d, the fault my own.
“ He neither could or durst, the guiltless youth—
“ Ye moon and stars bear witness to the truth !
“ His only crime (if friendship can offend)
“ Is too much love to his unhappy friend.”

DRYDEN.

So in the friendship between *David* and *Jonathan*—1 Sam. xviii. 1.—where it is said
—*the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David,*

David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul: and ver. 3.—then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And we actually find Jonathan interposing with Saul on the behalf of David, even at the risque of his own life. 1 Sam. xx. 32, 33. So David's affection to Absalom—*Would to God I had died for thee, my son!* 2 Sam. xviii. 33. And, to the shame of us Christians be it spoken, this heroic and disinterested friendship is even to be found among the Heathen (in notion at least) witness the fine and beautiful story of Nysus and Euryalus. Virg. Æn. ix. l. 427, &c. Even Epicurus could say, “that a wise man will sometimes die for his friend.” See Leland, vol. ii. p. 96.

We must readily allow, that the REDEEMER's love to his people surpasseth all human conception, as to the full and adequate knowledge and comprehension of it, and leaves, at an immeasurable distance, all the instances of the most disinterested love and friendship, that ever did, or can exist among mortals. This is finely touched by the pen of inspiration, Rom. v. 7. *For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure (ταχα, perhaps) for a good man some would even dare to die.* But God commendeth his love to us, in that while we were yet sinners (and therefore—enemies, ver. 10.) CHRIST died for us. Well then may the same APOSTLE (Eph. iii. 19.) call it—*ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Χριστοῦ*—the love of CHRIST which passeth knowledge. These considerations may suffice to shew, that OUR

LORD'S—καθως ηγαπησα υμας—*AS I have loved you*—is not to be taken in any other sense, than as directory for the *motives* of their affection towards each other, or to describe the *manner* of that love which they were to bear each other *as his disciples*, and for *his sake*. This was a *new commandment*, not as to the *matter* of it (for *love is the fulfilling of THE LAW*) but as to the *manner* and *measure* of it, grounded on the *new principle* of their relationship *to him*, and to each other *in him*.

A like sentiment occurs Luke vi. 36. *Be ye therefore merciful, AS (καθως) your Father is merciful*; where GOD'S *mercy* to man, is made the rule of our dealings with each other. What is there, in all this, contrary to, or inconsistent with, *Moses and the prophets*?

“ But we meet with the very expression—
 “ *the law of CHRIST*, Gal. vi. 2.—*Bear ye one*
 “ *another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of*
 “ *CHRIST.*”—By *bearing one another's burdens* (a metaphor taken from easing another by carrying a burden for him, or assisting him in carrying it) I should apprehend that we are to understand, what the *Apostle* expresses—Rom. xii. 15.—by *weeping with them that weep*; *i. e.* so to be affected with *their sorrows*, as even to make them *our own*, and to be as assiduous in their removal, or alleviation, as we should be *were they our own* *. But is this a *new law of CHRIST*, in opposition to,

* This sympathetic tenderness is finely touched by the *Apostle*, 1 Cor. xii. 25, 26.

inconsistent with, or differing in the matter of it from, the law of the Old Testament? Rather, doth not this fall under—*thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*? Compare Gal. v. 14. This was to be observed under the Old Testament, as well as under the *New*; we find this exemplified in those familiar instances put Deut. xxii. 1—4. Nor was this to be confined to *friends* only, but to be extended to *enemies*. Exod. xxiii. 4, 5. Though the *letter* of these laws expressed only things comparatively trivial, yet, doubtless, the *spirit* of them extended to matters of more serious consequence, and were rules for their conduct towards each other in whatever calamities they or theirs might be involved: a very striking instance of this appears (Psalm xxxv. 12, 13, 14.) in the behaviour *David* observed with respect to some of his ungrateful enemies—*they rewarded me evil for good, to the spoiling of my soul* (שָׂוִי—to the depriving it of comfort.) *But as for me, when they were sick* (or *afflicted*, as חָלָה also signifies) *my clothing was sackcloth—I humbled my soul with fasting—I behaved myself as though he had been my friend or brother—I bowed down heavily as one that mourneth for his mother.*

However, by the * *law of CHRIST*, may we not suppose something more to be meant than

* Those phrases—the *law of CHRIST*—the *Christian law*—the *law of the gospel*—the *morality of the gospel*—the *law of the New Testament*—as they are commonly used and understood, have greatly confounded the ideas of

than as to the *doctrine* which He taught in conformity to the *law of love*? May we not suppose, that here is a reference to the * *example* He set—to the *principle of action* (for so † *νομος* sometimes is to be understood—see Rom. vii. 21.) which led Him to bear our

mankind with regard to true and genuine *Christianity*, and have added no little strength to the cause of *Socinianism*.

All this arises from a want of duly considering and understanding the *nature, use, and properties* of the *divine law*, as well as the place it holds in the œconomy of the covenant of redemption.

Its nature.—*Spiritual—holy—just—and good*—therefore can never save, but be the ministration of death and condemnation to us as transgressors and guilty creatures. So that which was *ordained unto life* to the *innocent*, must be *found to be unto death* to the guilty. See Rom. vii. 10, 12, 14. 2 Cor. iii. 7, 9.

Its use.—To *convince of sin*—and thus to lead the sinner to the atonement, satisfaction, righteousness, and death of CHRIST, for pardon, justification, acceptance, and life eternal. See Rom. vii. 7, 8, 9, 10. Gal. ii. 19, &c. ; iii. 19, &c.

Its properties.—Being *written in the heart*, and *put into the mind*, it becomes a *rule of life* to the believer, an *holy directory* to shew him how he ought to walk and to please GOD ; and, in the sight of the *purity, perfection, and holiness* of the *divine law*, to live under constant self-abasement, and deep humility, *looking for the mercy of our LORD JESUS CHRIST unto eternal life*. See Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. Eph. ii. 10. Tit. ii. 11, 12, 13. Jude 21. Phil. iii. 9.

Those who live under a *practical* view of these things, are not only *almost*, but altogether *Christians*, and can no more think of a *new law*, than of a *new gospel*. Having drank of the *old wine of divine truth*, they desire not the *new wine of human error* (Luke v. 39.) *for they say the old is better*.

* John xiii. 15. Rom. xv. 5. 1 Pet. ii. 21.

† See Parkhurst's Gr. & Eng. Lex. sub voc. N° iv.

burden of guilt and punishment, when *He himself bare our sins in His own body on the tree,* 1 Pet. ii. 24. according to the prophecy that went before, *Is. liii. 4. Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. He suffered, leaving us an example, that we should follow His steps ;* and in particular, by observing the same rule or principle of action towards each other as He did towards us, in bearing, alleviating, removing *each other's burdens* of affliction and sorrow, by every means in our power? The *nomos*—law—or rule—which CHRIST acted by towards us, is proposed to our imitation, with respect to the *forgiveness of injuries,* (*Col. iii. 13.*) *Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any ; even as CHRIST forgave you, so also do ye.* So that when a man forgives an injury upon this principle, he may be said to fulfil the law of CHRIST in this respect, by acting agreeably to the rule—law—or principle of CHRIST towards His redeemed people. But what is there in all this inconsistent with the Old Testament, or that is not exactly conformable to it? CHRIST did nothing for us but what the Old Testament exactly foretold. *Acts xxvi. 22, 23.* The Apostle, in this passage of *Gal. vi. 2.* says only, in other words, what is said, 1 *John iv. 11. Beloved, if GOD so loved us, we ought also to love one another.* So OUR LORD, *John xiii. 34. That ye love one another, as I have loved you.* As it is written, *Is. lxiii. 8, 9. He was their Saviour ; in all their affliction He was afflicted.*

How then ought *Christians* to observe this rule towards each other ! How ought they *to weep with them that weep*—as well as *rejoice with them that do rejoice* !—*Who is weak, and I am not weak* ?—saith Paul, 2 Cor. xi. 29. *Who is offended, and I burn not* ? Did CHRIST bear our burden—was this the *νομος*—the principle of action—the rule—the law—which governed Him in all He *did* and *suffered* for us ? then let us *fulfil this law* towards each other, by interesting ourselves in each other's welfare and prosperity ; so as, by our consolation, advice, and every other means in our power, to *comfort those that mourn*—*raise up them that are cast down*—*bind up the broken-hearted*—and, in the spirit of meekness, *restore those that are* * *fallen*. Thus shall we bear each other's burdens, and so fulfil the law of CHRIST. See Is. lxi. 1, 2, 3. Lastly, it is not improbable that the *apostle* refers to what CHRIST said, John xiii. 34, 35. xv. 12.

I have before observed, that the idea of CHRIST's setting up a *new law* in opposition to the law of the Old Testament, as more *pure* † and *holy*, is equally replete with

* This is the more immediate sense of the *Apostle*, Gal. vi. 2. as appears by the context ; but yet I have given a larger sense to the words, as doubtless containing a rule for the conduct of *Christians* to each other under all their burdens, from whatever cause they may be derived.

† “ At CHRISTI lex, ut res alias, ita & hanc conjugii
“ inter *Christianos* ad perfectiorem redegit normam.”
—“ But the law of CHRIST reduced, as it did other
“ things, this *law of marriage* to a more perfect rule
“ among Christians.” Grot. de Jure, lib. ii. c. 5. § 2.
folly

folly and blasphemy. This is true ; for it not only carries us into the fundamental principle on which *Mahomet* founded his *Koran*, and into the very *sink* of *Socinianism*—but it sets forth CHRIST as *finding fault* with the law of GOD as delivered by *Moses*, and opposing Himself to it. This runs us, though we perceive it not, very near the borders of that monster of *heresy* CERINTHUS, and *his followers*, against whom *St. John* is supposed to have written the beginning of his gospel. They taught, that—“ the Creator of this
 “ world, who was also the sovereign and
 “ lawgiver of the *Jewish* people, was a Being
 “ endowed with the greatest virtues, and
 “ derived his birth from the supreme GOD :
 “ That this Being fell by degrees from His
 “ native virtue and primitive dignity : That
 “ the supreme GOD, in consequence of this,
 “ determined to destroy His empire, and sent
 “ upon earth, for this purpose, one of the
 “ ever-happy and glorious *Æons*, whose name
 “ was CHRIST ; that this CHRIST chose for
 “ His habitation the person of JESUS, a man
 “ of the most illustrious sanctity and justice,
 “ the son of *Joseph* and *Mary*, and, descend-
 “ ing in the form of a dove, entered into Him,
 “ while He was receiving the baptism of
 “ *John* in the waters of *Jordan* : That JE-
 “ SUS, after His union with CHRIST, OP-
 “ POSED HIMSELF WITH VIGOUR TO THE
 “ GOD OF THE JEWS, and was, by His insti-
 “ gation, seized and crucified by the *Hebrew*
 “ chiefs.—*Cerintbus* required of his follow-
 Y 4 “ ers,

—*Mahometism*—*Antinomianism*—*Neonomianism*, and all the *isms* which have plagued, harassed, and distressed, divided, and disgraced the church ever since.

Such is the picture of the *Cerinthians*. Surely we cannot survey it attentively, without recognizing a similitude of some of the features, at least something which may be called a strong *family likeness* to the idea of “polygamy’s being allowed by the law of nature and of *the Old Testament* (that is, by the God of the *Jews*) but forbidden by the *law of CHRIST*,” which is contrary to both.

If it be possible to produce a single *law of CHRIST*, which opposes the law of the Old Testament, all his claim to the character of the *Messiah* is at an end; for the *Messiah* was *to be made of a woman made under the law*. Gal. iv. 4.—*subject to its every precept, obedient to its every command*—and doubtless therefore to that solemn command, which, for the greater solemnity, is repeated *twice over*—*Ye shall not ADD to the word which I command you, neither shall ye DIMINISH aught from it*. Deut. iv. 2. xii. 32. How could the BLESSED JESUS be said to *fulfil all righteousness*, by a perfect conformity to *all things which are written in the book of the law to do them*—how say, as He doth by the Psalmist, Ps. xl. 8.

Testament from the Old Testament, and treating them as systems totally distinct from, and independent on each other.

Lo I come to do thy will—not mine own.— John vi. 38. *I am content to do it—* THY LAW *is within my heart—if* he either ADDED to the rule of life given from GOD by Moses, or DIMINISHED from it? How could he be said to observe the law in ALL THINGS—how give that holy challenge to the *Jews*; John viii. 46. *Which of you convinceth Me of sin?—*if he abrogated the law, the rule given as touching the moral actions of men, in any one instance, and set up a law of his own in opposition to it?

The false CHRIST of Cerintbus and of the Socinian, and the true CHRIST of GOD, are discernable by this essential difference—The first opposed himself with vigour to the GOD of the *Jews*—required that his disciples should abandon the law given by Moses, and regulate themselves by some new precepts of his own.—The Holy CHRIST of GOD declared—that not a jot or tittle was to pass from the law—that He came not to destroy, but to fulfil it—His whole teaching, practice, and example, magnified the law, and made it honourable. Therefore He exactly answered to the character given of Him in the Old Testament. He finished the transgression—made an end of sins—made reconciliation for iniquity—and brought in (by his sinless, perfect, and meritorious obedience) an everlasting righteousness, for the justification and salvation of his people to all eternity.

“ But what shall we say of the ordinances
 “ of Baptism and the Lord’s supper, are not
 “ these CHRIST’s own institutions, established
 “ by

“ by his *own authority* ? ” — To this I answer — that these *two sacraments* were to succeed *circumcision* and *the passover*, which were the *two sacramental ordinances* of the *Mosaic dispensation*, the whole of which was to cease and *vanish away* on the coming of *the Messiah*.

Another *priest* was to arise, not after the order of *Aaron*, but after the order of *Melchizedeck*, (Ps. cx. iv.) and this, according to the *prophecies* which went before. Now, as the excellent *Bishop Hall* observes, “ some *actions* are *prophecies*,” and he instances in the history of the *brazen serpent* the truth of his position ; he might have instanced in many more : and among the rest, in the history of *Melchizedeck*, of whom it is said, that *he was a priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him.* Heb. vii. 1. In Gen. xiv. 18. it is said—And *Melchizedeck*, king of *Salem*, brought forth *bread and wine*, and *blessed Abraham*, ver. 19. In this prophetic action is exhibited a type of *CHRIST*, the *priest after the order of Melchizedeck* (see Ps. cx. 4.) exhibiting, under the sacramental *bread and wine*, his body broken, and *his blood shed, for the life of the world.* So that after the *similitude of Melchizedeck* there ariseth another *priest*. Now all this was foretold, because ordained to happen in the fulness of time ; therefore the instituting the receiving of *bread and wine*, in remembrance of the sacrifice

fice of CHRIST, as emblems of *his body and blood*, was no *new law* of CHRIST, but as really foretold in the Old Testament, as was the sacrifice and death of CHRIST upon the cross. CHRIST *our passover being sacrificed for us* (1 Cor. v. 7.) there was an end of the typical ordinance of the *paschal lamb*. And the *priest* after the *similitude* of Melchizedeck, was to bless the *children of Abraham* (Gal. iii. 7.) by exhibiting *his body and blood* to their faith, under the *emblems of bread and wine*, as Melchizedeck (whom some learned men suppose to be CHRIST Himself appearing to Abraham in an human form, as he often did under the Old Testament, in token of his future incarnation) blessed the *father of all the faithful*, by exhibiting to his faith the *future great sacrifice* under those emblems which were to be the appointed figures to represent it under the gospel dispensation. Thus, (as the *Apostle* speaks, Heb. vii. 12.) as the *priesthood* was to be changed, there must be of necessity also a change * of the law. But all this was pre-ordained and foretold ages before it happened, and therefore is not to be looked upon as a *mere law* of the New Testament, but must bear equal date, in the intentions and designs of God, with the plan of redemption itself.

* It appears from the whole context, that the *moral law* is not here meant, but the *typical or ceremonial law* of sacrifices, which, together with the *Levitical priesthood*, were all to be done away on the *sacrifice* of the death of CHRIST.

So with regard to the ordinance of *Baptism*, this was exhibited under the figure or type of *Noah's ark*, wherein few, that is eight souls, were saved by water—the like figure whereunto 'Ω' ΑΝΤΙΤΥΠΟΥ — the antitype to which) even baptism doth now save us, not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards GOD, by the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST. 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21. As the bread and wine represent the body and blood of CHRIST, in the LORD's Supper, so the water in baptism represents the cleansing of the Holy Spirit, and all exhibit to our faith, touching what is past, what the sacraments of the *pass-over* and *circumcision* represented to the faith of the Old-Testament saints, touching what was then to come; but all meet in one grand central point—CHRIST, the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, Rom. x. 4. Therefore the sacraments of the LORD's Supper and baptism, are not new ordinances*, in any other sense, than as appointed of GOD to attend on the dispensation of the gospel of His grace, under the New Testament, when those sacraments were abolished which were to attend a different dispensation of the same gospel under the Old Testament. All argue one uniform, consistent design in the blessed GOD, carried on in different manifestations of

* See the outward visible sign and the inward and spiritual grace, in the sacrament of baptism, beautifully set forth, Is. xlv. 3. Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 27. with John iii. 5.

it, under the *Patriarchal*—* *Mosaical*—*Prophe-
tical*, and *Evangelical* ages, but subject to no
controul, opposition, or variation, as to the
matter of any single part or atom of it. The
further we follow the notion of CHRIST's
being the giver of a *new law*, in opposition to
the law of the Old Testament, the more
must we see it pregnant with consequences of
the most alarming and dreadful kind—be-
cause, this being the case, we are without a
Redeemer, and of course without any *redemp-
tion*; for we are told, that CHRIST *died for
the redemption of the transgressions that were un-
der the FIRST TESTAMENT*, Heb. ix. 15. by
which FIRST TESTAMENT we must under-
stand the *law of God* delivered by *Moses*; but
I can find no trace of any satisfaction for sins
committed against any *new law* of CHRIST:
we must look to ourselves for any *transgres-
sions against this*: and if so—*no flesh can be
saved*. Therefore some of the *old heretics*,
who were maintainers of this *new-law* scheme,
were perfectly consistent, in declaring, that
“no sin *after baptism* could be forgiven”—
against which horrible error, the 16th *Arti-
cle* of the *Church of England* is very scriptu-
rally and properly levelled.—But again—this
notion of CHRIST's abrogating the *old rule of*

* Those *divers washings* which we read of in the law of
Moses, and which (Heb. ix. 10.) the *apostle* classes among
the *carnal ordinances imposed till the time of reformation*,
were doubtless typical of *Christian baptism*, wherein, as
before under the law, the *body is washed with pure water*.
Heb. x. 22.

life, and enacting a *new one* in its place, as it turns us over to seek our salvation by a *new plan of obedience*, or personal righteousness of *our own*, makes void *both Testaments*. It annihilates the *law which was given by Moses*, it of course destroys the *grace and truth which came by JESUS CHRIST*. John i. 17. If we are not bound by the old *moral law*, we have no occasion to seek *redemption from its curse*, and absolution from its condemnation.—The *divinity of CHRIST*—the atonement of his precious blood—the *imputation of His righteousness*—His *satisfaction*—*merit*—*vicarious sufferings* and *obedience*, together with his *intercession* at the *right hand of God*, and all other appendages belonging and essentially necessary to his *priestly office*, by which alone we can have *redemption*, even the *forgiveness of our sins*, may bear as small a price in our eyes as in the eyes of *Socinus, Mahomet, or Cerinthus*. If the *old law* be abrogated as a *rule of life*, then have we nothing to do with—*Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them*. Gal. iii. 10. The *law* is no longer a *ministration of death*, 2 Cor. iii. 7. and *condemnation*. And, if this be the case, the whole foundation of the *redemption that is in CHRIST JESUS* is sapped and destroyed, and the whole fabric of man's *salvation*, which is *built upon it*, must fall into one dreadful and horrible union; we must reverse *CHRIST'S* declaration—*I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it*—and say, that he came *not to fulfil*

but to *destroy it*: Here we must join in the madness of the *Antinomians*, and deny the *obligation of the law*—or in the horrid errors of the *Socinians*, and renounce the *hope of the gospel*. To mention all the *appendages* to this *new-law* scheme would be endless; suffice it to say, that they are, in one shape or other; connected with every *heresy* that ever was, or can be invented; for all *heresy*, however coloured or disguised by the art and subtlety of men, or, as the *Apostle* says, Eph. iv. 14. *by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive*, must originate in the confounding those two distinct propositions, which are laid down in the beginning of *St. John's gospel* as above-mentioned—*The law was given by Moses—Grace and truth came by JESUS CHRIST*.

CHRIST came, neither to set up a *new law* nor a *new gospel*, but (as the Scripture had foretold) to bear testimony to the truth of *both*, as revealed by *Moses and the Prophets*.—Thus he told *Pilate*, John xviii. 37.—*To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto THE TRUTH: Every one that is of THE TRUTH beareth my voice*. And in that most affectionate prayer for His disciples—John xvii.—He saith, ver. 17. *Sanctify them through THY TRUTH—THY WORD IS TRUTH*.

To conclude this point:—If we compare scripture with scripture in every instance, we shall not find a single *law*, or *rule of life*, in the New Testament, which has not its foundation

dation in the Old Testament, and that CHRIST came not as a *law-giver and a judge*, when He appeared in the *likeness of sinful flesh*—Rom. viii. 3. but as a *law-fulfiller and a Saviour*—*I came not* (said He, John xii. 47) *to judge the world, but to save the world*. Not to introduce any new rule of right and wrong, which was to change the nature of moral good and evil; but for the redemption of the transgressions under the first testament, that they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. Heb. ix. 15.

As a *prophet*—He opened and explained the *law*, and preached the *gospel*. As a *priest*—He made *atonement* for the guilty.—As *king*—He established the moral *law* as a *rule of life* to his *subjects*; leaving it as He found it—a *spiritual, holy, righteous, perfect* institution (Ps. xix. 7.) to which nothing could be *added*, from which nothing could be *diminished*; reaching not only to the *outward* actions of the life, but to the *inward* thoughts; tempers, desires, and intents of the heart. Were it otherwise, and the New Testament can be supposed to contain some *rule of life* which is not in the Old Testament, *Abraham's* counsel, which he advised the rich man's *five brethren* to follow, was very imperfect—*They have MOSES and the PROPHETS, let them hear them*—*If they hear not MOSES and the PROPHETS, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead*. What good would *Moses* have done them, if the *rule of life* laid down by him had been *incomplete and deficient*?—what bene-

fit could have accrued to them from listening, though ever so attentively, to the *prophets*, if these had no better news to tell them, than that in the reign of *Augustus Cæsar*, a man was to come and set up a *new law*? Why refer these poor *sinners* to the writings of *Moses* and the *prophets*, if there yet remained some *new rule* of *faith* and *obedience*, not to be met with in *their writings*?—Indeed, if this was the case, it was but to little purpose for CHRIST to command the *Jews* to *search the scriptures* (John v. 39.): they might, indeed, as He says, *think they had eternal life in them*, but they were sadly mistaken, if a *new law* was to be the condition of it, and the way to it, which was not revealed and contained in those scriptures. In vain also were they * referred to the *Hebrew scriptures*, as *testifying of Him*; for not a word is there to be found of His appearance upon earth as a repealer and abrogater of the *moral law* of *Moses*, and as the enacter and establisher of a *new rule of*

* Very remarkable is that account which we have of OUR SAVIOUR'S discourse with the *two disciples*, after his *resurrection*, as they were going to *Emmaus*—O fools, and slow of heart (said He) to believe all that the *PROPHETS* have spoken!—And beginning at *MOSES* and all the *PROPHETS*, He expounded to them in ALL THE SCRIPTURES, the things concerning HIMSELF. Luke xxiv. 25—27. And again, when He appeared to the *eleven*, and to them that were with them, (ver. 33, 36.) He said unto them (ver. 44.) *These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the LAW OF MOSES, and in the PROPHETS, and in the PSALMS, concerning Me.*—Then (ver. 45.) opened He their understanding, that they might understand THE SCRIPTURES.
life

life in its place. When our BLESSED SAVI-
 OUR said (Matt. v. 18.) *Till heaven and earth
 pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass
 from the law, &c.* He spake in the most em-
 phatical manner, introducing what He said
 with an *Amen-verily*—and though the expres-
 sions He uses have been called *proverbial*, yet
 no doubt but He is to be understood *literally*.
 The Hebrew *jod*, (for doubtless he expressed
 himself in *Hebrew*) is the smallest letter in the
Hebrew alphabet, yet the omission of it in
 some words might wholly alter the sense of
 them.—So with regard to the *νεπαία*, which we
 render *tittle*, it comes from *νεπας*, an *horn* (Heb.
 קרן) and denotes those *little projections* which
 in *Hebrew* distinguish one similar letter from
 another—as a ב from a כ—or a ג from a ג.
 Many texts might be produced, where taking
 away one of these, would make a considerable
 alteration in the sense. Now can CHRIST
 be supposed to have been so watchful over
 the *book of the law, and all things contained
 therein*, as to declare that not a single letter,
 or the smallest part of a letter, could suffer
 the least diminution, and yet himself vacate,
 alter, change, abrogate, and repeal whole and
 entire statutes? And this to promulgate to
 mankind a *new rule of life, more excellent than
 that under which they had formerly lived*, here-
 by stamping a want of excellence, purity, and
 holiness, as well as of wisdom and perfection,
 on the Divine Law?

The *Apostle* says, (Gal. iii. 21.) *If there*
 Z 2 *had*

had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness (or that by which men could have been justified) should have been by the law; but the scripture hath concluded (συ-
νελεισε, hath shut up together as in a prison) all under sin. Again, He gives us to under-
stand, that the justification of man is impossible by the law—What the law could not do—τὸ
ἀδύνατον τῷ νόμῳ—impossibile legis—THE IM-
POSSIBLE THING of the law—Why so?—Be-
cause the law itself was imperfect?—No—
but because it was weak through the flesh. Not
from any defect in the law itself, but through
the impediment arising from the corruption
of the human nature, which has brought us
under guilt, and rendered us incapable sub-
jects of its absolving and justifying sen-
tence. As it argues a perfection and purity of
holiness in God himself, that He is of purer eyes
than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity
(Hab. i. 13.) so it argues a perfection and
purity in the divine law, that it cannot justify
a sinner: and if (according to the new-law
scheme) CHRIST has abrogated this law, and
introduced one that can, it must only be from
a want of perfection and purity in the new law,
which is not to be found in the old law. This
must be attended with many certain and
dreadful consequences;—amongst which, one
is—making CHRIST the minister of sin. Gal.
ii. 17.—Another, representing Him as de-
feating the purpose of his own death; for it is
a maxim self-evidently true, that if righte-
ousness

ousness (or justification) *come by the law*—by any law whatsoever, no matter what—CHRIST is dead in vain. Gal. ii. 21.

The *moral law*, or *rule of life*, delivered from God by *Moses*, is founded in the very nature of *that relation* which every reasonable creature must bear to its Creator. It is all reducible to two heads, which OUR SAVIOUR holds forth as the *two great commandments of the law*. *Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, with all thy mind, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength; and thy neighbour as thy * self*—is too perfect a *system of morals* to admit of the least *addition or improvement*: it is a *rule of life* to angels as well as to men; and a constant conformity to this *holy law*, constitutes the happiness of the *angels, principalities, and powers* (Col. i. 16.) of heaven. Could one of these cease from loving God with *all* its faculties; could it feel a single *wrong temper*, either with respect to God, or to its *fellow spirits*, it would *sin*—it would *leave its first estate*, and, with the other *apostate spirits*, be cast down to hell, and be reserved in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day. 2 Pet. ii. 4. Jude 6.

It can therefore be no more true, that CHRIST came upon earth to give a *new law* to *mortals*, than that He ascended into heaven to give a *new law* to *angels*. He could not do either, without materially affecting the very nature of *that relation* which the intelligent

* Deut. vi. 5. Lev. xix. 18.

and reasonable parts of the creation bear to God and each other.

As far as the *moral* law of GOD relates to mortals, we must consider the *commerce of the sexes*, with all its various relations, consequences, and dependencies, as a most material object of it: so material, as to form a very considerable part of the *sacred code*. It naturally ranges itself under the duties of the *second table*. So the *Apostle*, Rom. xiii. 9. *For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, &c.* and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour.* Now if CHRIST forbade that which was before allowed, He extended the obligation of the divine law beyond what the Old Testament had done; therefore must be said to *add* something to the *second table of the law*. This consequence cannot be avoided, if we suppose Him giving a sense to the word *אֶנֶּס*—*adultery*—which it never had before. He certainly hereby extended the *seventh* commandment as to its *curse and punishment*. On the other hand, if He had allowed what the law had forbidden under the Old Testament, He had *diminished* from its curse and punishment, by narrowing its obligation. In this view He had *diminished* from the law. In either case, we number Him with the transgressors in a most awful and dreadful sense; for no positive command of the law is revealed with more solemnity than Deut. iv. 2. and Deut. xii. 32. which

which forbad, absolutely forbad, *both*. It is therefore as impossible that CHRIST should condemn *polygamy* as *adultery*, as that He should allow *adultery* as *lawful commerce*; because the first was *adding* to the law, which never forbad it, the other *diminishing* from the law, which positively forbad *adultery with another man's wife*. Exod. xx. 14. explained Lev. xx. 10.

To suppose that God should ever revoke, alter, or change those *moral institutes*, which were revealed under the Old Testament for the regulation and government of mankind, is to suppose some defect in the DEITY, some want of prescience to foresee mischiefs which might arise, and which were not sufficiently guarded against. This argues an imbecillity or weakness of understanding and knowledge, like that of human *legislators*, who make laws to remedy evils as they arise before them, but cannot *tell what a day may bring forth*; and therefore repeal at one time, the law which they made at another. When we argue for the immutability of the law, we argue for the *perfection* of it, which is, in other words, to contend for the *perfection* of HIM that made it.

When God *created the heavens and the earth*, He gave them a law *which cannot be broken*; by this law the material universe is governed, and will be governed to the consummation of all things. The least departure from it, either by addition or diminution, would throw the whole into disorder, confusion, and

ruin. So with respect to the *moral* world, the laws which God once gave for the regulation and government of this, are equally *sure* and *stedfast*; and it is owing to a departure from these, that disorder, confusion, and ruin are the portion of wretched man.

The *divine law*, as delivered from God by *Moses*, may be compared to a *golden chain*; the several *statutes* which compose it are the *links*. Now we know, that whichever link of a chain be broken, all that is suspended by it must fall to the ground. That the security and protection of the *weaker sex* against the deceit, violence, and cruelty of the *stronger*, depend wholly on the law of God, is a truth which none, who admit that God ever gave a law, will dispute. And shall we suppose that CHRIST came into the world to *weaken* that security, by destroying some of the *links* of the *chain* on which it is suspended? and this by introducing a *new law*, so contrary to the law *which was given by Moses*, that men, in some situations, cannot *obey the one*, without *transgressing the other*? This is making CHRIST's acts like the threatening of Rehoboam, 1 Kings xii. 11. *Whereas my father did lade you with an heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.*—But far, far be it from us, to impute such a proceeding to Him who came not to *destroy men's lives, but to save them*. Luke ix. 56.—That no such thing is chargeable upon Him, will appear still more plainly, on our taking a nearer

nearer and more critical view of those passages of the *gospels*, in which CHRIST is supposed to condemn *polygamy* as *adultery*. The first which I shall take notice of, as introductory to the rest, is *Matt. v. 31, 32. It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement. But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery.* Here our LORD shews that there is but one *lawful cause of divorce* in the sight of GOD, so as to set the husband entirely free from the wife. The *Jews*, on the contrary, had been taught by the *rabbies*, that a man who wanted to get rid of his wife, had nothing to do but to give * *her a bill of divorcement*, and this for *any cause* whatsoever. But CHRIST shews, that such unjust divorces had no operation on the *bond of marriage*; so that marrying such a divorced woman, was as much an act of *adultery*, as if the man had taken her while she cohabited with her husband. CHRIST

* The *Jews* themselves held, that there were two sorts of men who never could divorce their wives: First—those who failed in their proofs against them on the trial mentioned *Deut. xxii. 13—19.*—Secondly, those who had *laid hold on* them and *lain with them*, without betrothment or espousals, *Deut. xxii. 29*; for in both those cases it is especially said—*He may not put her away all his days.* As for us *Christians*, we suffer a man to *take and divorce* as many women as he can seduce, provided they have no *other* claim upon him, than what the *positive law* of GOD gives them.

did

did not declare this, as if it had been lawful under the Old Testament, and now made unlawful by some *new law* of His, but on the footing of the *primary institution* of marriage from the *very beginning*, as will appear when we farther consider the passage in Matt. xix. on which the conceit is founded, that “*polygamy* is forbidden by *the law* of “CHRIST.” Suffice it to observe at present, that in this place of Matt. v. 31, 32. nothing is said about *polygamy*, or a man’s having *two wives*.

Our LORD says—*causeth her to commit adultery*. How so?—First—by laying her under the *temptation*, which may be supposed to be not a little heightened by her resentment against her husband, who had first used her ill, and then divorced her; especially where this was done for the sake of *taking another woman whom he liked better*. Secondly—she was tempted to it by the very terms of the bill * of divorcement, which was to the following effect—

“ Such

* The *bill of divorcement* was, as practised by the *Jews*, attended with so many circumstances of difficulty (as may be seen in *Selden*, Ux. Hebr. lib. vi. c. 25. p. 514.) that it seems to have been an invention rather to *prevent* divorces, than to promote them. However, it is very clear from our LORD’s discourse with the *Pharisees*, Matt. xix. that they were not only *used*, but *abused*, to a very great degree.

It is remarkable that at *Rome*, from the foundation of the *republic* to the *first divorce*, there was a space of 520 years; though the men had a power of divorcing their wives almost at pleasure. This affords no small proof
of

“ Such a day, such a month, and year, I
 “ such a one, of such a place, do, of my
 “ own free consent and choice, repu-
 “ diate thee *A. B.* my late wife, banish
 “ thee from me, and restore thee to thy
 “ own liberty, and thou mayest hence-
 “ forth go whither, *and marry whom,*
 “ *thou wilt.* And this is thy bill of
 “ divorcement and writing of expulsion,
 “ according to the law of *Moses* and
 “ *Israel.* Signed by two witnesses.” See
Univ. Hist. vol. iii. p. 149.

The people having been taught that such a *bill of divorcement* was a valid dissolution of the marriage, the woman of course believed, that she, having received it, was free to *marry any other man*, as much as if her husband had been dead; and thus was she *caused*, by this deceit, to marry another, by which, in truth, and in the sight of God, she *committed adultery*.

of the chastity and good behaviour of the *Roman* matrons during that period. And indeed the account we have of that *first divorce*, need not lessen them in our esteem; for *Carvilius Ruga* did not divorce his wife for any fault in her, but because he had no children by her: therefore, thinking himself bound by a foolish oath, which the *Censors* at that time caused people to take, he put her away, and married another. See *Ant. Univ. Hist.* vol. iii. p. 148. note W. and vol. xii. p. 216.

In after times, the *Roman* women grew so debauched and profligate, that when *Severus* mounted the throne, he found on the roll of causes to be tried, no less than *three thousand* prosecutions for *adultery*. He had formed a scheme of reformation, which from that moment he abandoned as impossible. See *Alexander's Hist. of Wom.* vol. i. 252.

The

The latter clause of ver. 32. *Whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery*, is wanting in the Cambridge manuscript. St. *Augustine* says, that some *Greek* and *Latin* copies had it not, and seems to treat it as a needless tautology; his words are these—"Explicatus hic sensus putari potuit in eo quod superius dictum est"—"*facit eam mæchari*"—"quomodo enim dimissa fit *mæcha*, nisi fiat qui eam duxerit *mæchus*?"—that is—"The sense of this clause may be supposed to be explained in what goes before—*causeth her to commit adultery*—for how could she become an *adulteress*, unless the man who married her became an *adulterer*?" But when it is considered that our SAVIOUR was speaking to a people *whose ears were dull of hearing*, Matt. xiii. 15—who were taught by their *Doctōrs* to stand upon the mere *letter* of scripture, without entering into the *spirit* of it—it was necessary that *line should be upon line, line upon line—precept upon precept, precept upon precept*—as the *Prophet* * speaks, Is. xxviii. 10.—therefore, that our LORD should not leave them to draw conclusions from words of implication only, and thus to throw the sin upon the woman alone, because the man was not mentioned, but so express Himself as to bring the whole law on the subject into full view; as Lev. xx. 10. where both

* So the *Apostle*, Phil. iii. 1.—*To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.*

the *woman* and the *man* are explicitly mentioned, the one as an *adulteress*, the other as an *adulterer*. Surely then, on the analogy of scripture itself, the reading of this last clause may be retained, as it stands in our printed copies.

The next scripture to be farther considered, is Matt. xix. 9. *I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife (except it be for fornication) and shall marry another, committeth adultery, and whoso marrieth her which is put away, committeth adultery.*—This is highly necessary, in order to bring into view the *whole* of OUR LORD's design, which was to reprobate the various abuses of *divorce*, at that time practised by the *Jews*, and among the rest, the horrid traffic, which the very *law of Moses*, to which they referred for their *justification*, condemned—that of *divorcing* their wives *for every cause*, and, of course, that they might *exchange* them *for a time*, and then take them *back again*;—this was expressly forbidden by Deut. xxiv. 2, 3, 4. therefore certainly included in OUR LORD's discourse on the subject of unlawful and unjust *divorce*. And indeed I much doubt, whether, in this place, the applying and enforcing of Deut. xxiv. 2, 3, 4. was not the *chief* object which OUR SAVIOUR had in view—(see before p. 85, 86, 87.) For where a man *divorced* his wife for such a purpose (which, according to the *Hillelians* was held lawful—see before p. 82.) he became an *adulterer* in a *double* sense, as not only causing his own unjustly-divorced
wife

wife to commit *adultery*, by prostituting her to another man, according to Matt. v. 32.—but also by taking the other man's unjustly-divorced wife to himself; which, in this view of the matter, seems the true import of *γαμηση ἄλλην* in this place. We must remember, that Christ is arguing with the *Jews* on the footing of the *law of Moses*, as it stood in the * *Hebrew* scripture, not as the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* interpreted it, or as we have translated it. See the learned AINSWORTH on Deut. xxiv. 1, &c. and GELL's Essay towards a New Translation, p. 723.

A person of infidel-principles was once making himself merry in a large company, at the expence of the scriptures, and told his companions, that he could prove the prophet of the Christians (as he called CHRIST) *mistaken*, even upon the most common subjects. After awakening the curiosity of the company, he thus gratified it—"CHRIST says, "that *old bottles* are not so strong as *new*" (alluding to Matt. ix. 17.) "and therefore, "if *new wine* is put into *old bottles*, it will "break them—now don't every body know "that *old glass* is just as strong as *new*, for "who ever heard that *glass* was the *weaker* "for being *old*?" A *clergyman* in company, who had been made the butt of his wit, gently reprov'd the ignorance and folly of

* In which the word נָאֵר—*adultery*—in no one instance was referred to *polygamy*, nor had any other sense, but the defilement of a *betrothed* or *married* woman.

this witling, by asking him if he understood *Greek*?—"Greek, Sir?—No, Sir—but what has *Greek* to do with it?—a bottle's a bottle, whether in *Greek* or *English*, every body knows that, and that an *old bottle* is just as good and as strong as a *new one*."—"Not quite, Sir," (replied the other) "if they are made of *leather* or *skins*, which was the fact as to the bottles CHRIST speaks of, as their *Greek* * name imports;—and indeed it is so in many countries, even to

* 'Ασχος signifies a *leathern bottle*, or *vessel*, used to hold wine. See Josh. ix. 4, 13, where the *Hebrew* word נֶאֱרוֹת is rendered by the LXX, ἀσχοι. They are said to be *old* and *rent*, and *bound up*. See HARM. *Obs. on Scripture*, vol. i. p. 131, 132.

The celebrated *M. de Voltaire*, whose malice against the scriptures could only be equalled by his ignorance of their contents, endeavours to prove, from *Prov.* xxiii. 31. that the whole book is a forgery, and not written by *Solomon*; this because כִּי־ is rendered, in the translations before him, by the word *glass*—*vitrum*—*verre*—"whereas," says that *wise critic*, "*drinking-glasses* were not invented till after *Solomon's* time," taking it for granted that כִּי־ must signify a *drinking-glass*; whereas it denotes any *drinking-cup* which *covers* or *incloses* the liquor, of whatever materials the said *cup* may consist.

He is alike happy in his proof of 1 Sam. xxviii. (which gives an account of *Saul's* consulting the *witch of Endor*) being a forgery, "because the word *Python*" (used in the *Vulgate* translation) "was not known 'till the *Jews* had some acquaintance with the *Greeks*, after the time of *Alexander*."—The *Hebrew* is אֹב, which the LXX render by ἐγγασπίμυθον—*ventriloquam*—a kind of *wizard*, so called from their inward way of speaking or muttering. But not a glimpse of *Python* is there to be found. See *Letters of Jews to Voltaire*, vol. ii. p. 275, 373. Transl. by *Lefanu*.

“ this day, that people use skins by way of
 “ vessels to contain wine.”—On which side
 the laughter of the company turned is not
 very difficult to imagine.

Something like this *facetious* gentleman’s
 misconception of things is likely to be our
 portion, if we form our ideas of the import
 of certain passages of scripture, from the sound
 of words in our *translation*, without adverting
 to the *sense* of the *original*. So also, if we
 interpret the scripture according to our own
 conceits, without duly considering the *times*
 when—the *places* where—the *occasions* on
 which—and the *situations* of the *persons* to
 whom they are addressed. These observa-
 tions are peculiarly needful respecting the
 portion of scripture now before us, especially
 as we have popular mistake, vulgar error, and
 of course, prejudice of education, to contend
 with. Still all these cannot alter the truth
 of scripture, or render it at all the more cer-
 tain, that CHRIST here *condemns*, or indeed
 mentions, *polygamy*.

He was surrounded at this time by a *great*
multitude of people, who, in principle, as
 living under the law of the Old Testament,
 were *polygamists*, and, doubtless, numbers of
 them were so in *practice*—many there must
 have been among this great multitude of *Jews*,
 who had either married *two wives* together,
 or having *one*, took *another* to her, and coha-
 bited with *both*. Had our LORD intended to
 have condemned such practices, he would
 scarcely have made use of words which did

not

not describe their situation, but of words that *did*. It is very plain that—*He that putteth away his wife, by giving her a bill of divorce-ment*—could have nothing to do with the man who took *two wives* together, or *one to another*, and cohabited alike with *both*. But we are apt, like the man and his *bottles*, to construe scripture, by supposing persons to whom particular things are said, were in the circumstances *then*, in which we are *now*; but it was far otherwise: they had no municipal laws against *polygamy*, as we have. So far from it, their *whole law* (as has been abundantly proved) *allowed* it. Which said law, and every part thereof, was, at the time CHRIST spake what is recorded in Matt. xix. 9, in as full force and efficacy, as at the moment after *Moses* had delivered it to the people. He therefore could no more state *polygamy* as adultery by the law of *Israel*, than I can state it as *high treason* by the laws of *England*.

It is to be observed, that the subject-matter in debate was the business of *divorce*, which the *Jews* had carried to a shameful height, and this is what CHRIST is opposing. The occasion of the discourse seems to be this—what He had said in His sermon on the mount, in *Galilee*, about *divorce*, Matt. v. 31, 32, had, doubtless, been carried to the *Pharisees* in *Judea*, by some of their emissaries, who were among the *multitudes that followed Him from thence*, Matt. iv. 25. most probably by some of those *spies*, which were set upon all

his words and actions. See Luke xx. 20. The Pharisees were provoked, as what CHRIST had said militated against those notions which they had received, and strenuously maintained among their disciples. On His return into *the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan*, He was also attended by *great multitudes*, ver. 2. The Pharisees thought this a fair opportunity to *entangle Him in His talk* (as Matt. xxii. 15.) and lay Him under difficulties, either that of disavowing what He had said, or, if He persisted in it, to represent Him before the multitude as an enemy to the *law of Moses*. Therefore we read, ver. 3. the *Pharisees also came unto Him, tempting Him*—by proposing an ensnaring question, which they supposed would lay Him under one or other of the difficulties above-mentioned, either of denying what He had said, or of appearing an adversary to *Moses*. They therefore ask Him—*Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?* His answer to this is not founded on any new law of His own, but on the original command of God, delivered by *Adam*, Gen. ii. 24. The *Pharisees* then bring their design into full view, by quoting *Moses's* authority against the answer which CHRIST had given, and in defence of their own opinion. The passage which they referred to, was *Deut. xxiv. 1*, which they called a *command*; but our LORD corrects them, and calls it only a *permission*; and this—for the *hardness of their hearts*; not that it affected the matter in the sight of God, by vacating the marriage,

marriage, for that a man who married a *divorced woman*, was as guilty of *adultery* in the sight of God, as if she had not been *divorced*, and so was the *divorced woman*, who married again, *living her husband*. That this was the scope of CHRIST's reasoning upon the matter, appears from the answer which He gave to His disciples, Mark x. 10, 11, 12. when *in the house, they asked Him again of the same matter*—περὶ τῆς αὐτῆς—about the *self-same identical* thing.—He cannot be supposed to vary His opinion upon the *same point*; therefore, in words which had the same meaning, He repeats the substance of what He had before said to the *Pharisees*.—He saith unto them, *Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her*; to which He adds—*And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery*.

As the *Pharisees* had referred CHRIST to the authority of *Moses*, by way of answer to what He had said, to prove the unlawfulness of *divorces*; He takes an opportunity to detect their abuse of that scripture, Deut. xxiv. 1. &c. (for this is the passage evidently referred to) and proves, on the ground of ver. 4. of that chapter, the truth of all he said upon the subject; namely, that these permissive *divorces*, which *Moses* suffered (ἐπέτρεψεν) for the *hardness of their hearts*, wrought no dissolution of the marriage-bond, but that the man who thus *injuriously divorced* his wife, *caused her to be defiled*; and he

who married her, *defiled* her ; but yet, having married her, she could not * return to her *first* husband, on a *divorce* from the *second*, without a fresh act of *adultery*. *Defiling* a man's wife, and committing *adultery* upon her, are synonymous terms, as may appear by comparing *Prov.* vi. 29. with *Ezek.* xviii. 11, 15. Therefore OUR SAVI-OUR says no more in effect, than is said *Deut.* xxiv. 4 ; He only enlarges upon, explains, and applies the doctrine there delivered, concerning the *defilement* and *adultery* which was the consequence of marrying a *divorced* woman, and has a view to the licentious practices of the *Jews*, under the sanction of these wanton and causeless *divorces*. The ancient *Jews* had learned from the *Egyptians*, amongst whom they dwelt so long, a practice of changing their wives, and afterwards taking them again ; which the law, *Deut.* xxiv. 1—4, was expressly made to prevent, as one of the greatest abominations in the sight of GOD. Still this practice prevailed in later times, as may be gathered from *Jer.* v. 8. *They were as fed horses in the morning, every one neighed after his neighbour's wife.* Their in-

* The instance of *David's* taking again *Michal*, *Saul's* daughter, after she had been the wife of *Phaltiel*, the son of *Laiſh*, had nothing to do with this ; for she had not been put away from *David* by bill of divorcement, or any other act of his, but violently taken away by her father *Saul*, and given to *Phaltiel*. Nor was it, probably, in her power to have gainsayed the imperious commands of her tyrannical father. See 1 Sam. xxv. 44. 2 Sam. iii. 13, &c.

tercourse with the * *Greeks* † and *Romans*, in later times still, was another means of promoting this unnatural and horrid traffic. This could not be carried on among the *Jews* without the expedient of the ספר כריתת—*bill of divorcement*; without this the *adultery* had been too barefaced, but *with* it, they had been taught by their *rabbies*, such as *Hillel* (who held that a man's seeing a woman he liked better than his own wife, was a just cause of divorce) to do as they pleased. They might put away their wives for every cause, therefore for this, among the rest, because they saw another's (for that may be signified by the word ἀλλαν, as I shall observe presently) whom they liked better than their own. Thus under these divorces they could exchange ‡ their wives. For instance—*A.* liked the wife of *B.*—*B.* liked the wife of *A.*—each hating his own—they agree to change—How shall this be done? If the wives are

* See before p. 210—13.

† How fond and eager the *Jews* were to imitate the heathen fashions and manners, especially those of the *Greeks*, see 2 Macc. iv. 15, 16.

‡ This was so abhorred of God, that he made the positive law, Deut. xxiv. 1—4. in such terms, as to prevent the man who had divorced his wife, from ever taking her again after her marriage with another man, not only on a divorce from that man, but even after his death. It is a grievous thing that our translation has obscured the whole drift and meaning of the passage, (see before p. 85, &c.) for by this it is, that the reader is led into the notion of CHRIST's making a new law against polygamy, while he is enforcing the old law against unjust divorce.

A a 3

exchanged

exchanged without a *bill of divorce*, adultery must be acknowledged on both sides; they therefore have recourse to a *bill of divorcement*; under which the woman was held to be *legally* put away, according to the law of *Moses* and *Israel* (see before p. .) and was free to marry *whom she would*; the *bill of divorcement* being looked upon as an absolute and total dissolution of the marriage-bond. Our LORD is shewing the contrary. First, On the footing of the indissolubility of the contract, in the sight of GOD, by any human authority. Secondly, On the terms of the very law, to which the *Pharisees* referred him for their justification; which being taken *all together*, proves no more than an implied permission of *divorce* for the *hardness of their hearts*; or, as we say—*a mensâ & toro propter sævitiam*—“from bed and board by reason of cruelty:” and this was, that women might be released from the barbarity with which their cruel husbands would have treated them, on conceiving some dislike, had they been forced to have lived with them. But yet, as *Moses* shews, the *bond of marriage* still remained; so that if a man married such a woman, he and the woman were both guilty of *adultery*, in the sight of GOD, notwithstanding the *bill of divorcement*. If this had not been the case, *Moses* could not have called the marriage of the divorced woman a *defilement*—saying, Deut. xxiv. 4.—*after she is defiled*. Our SAVIOUR, therefore, doth not by His—
I say

I say unto you, mean that He was enacting * a new law, or laying down a rule that was opposite to, or inconsistent with, the law of Moses—had He attempted this, he had fallen into the very snare which the Pharisees had laid for Him. But—“*I say unto you*” means here, as in the instances before related in His sermon upon the mount (see before, p. 310—313) as if He said—“Your *rabbies* teach you “ so and so, and in so teaching you they “ make void the law of God through their “ traditions;—but *I*, who am come to re- “ store the honour of *Moses’s* law, by restor- “ ing its true sense and meaning—I—on the “ authority of that law, which you have “ partially quoted, without taking the “ whole together—*say unto you*, though, for “ the *hardness of your hearts*, *MOSES suffered* “ *you to put away your wives*, and suspended “ any punishment which might have accrued “ for so doing, yet did he not, nor could he “ thereby dissolve the marriage itself; so “ far from it, he terms the marriage of such “ a divorced woman a *defilement*. Therefore “ *I say unto you—whosoever putteth away* “ *his wife, (except for the cause of fornication—* “ *which is the only legal cause of* “ *divorce) and marieth another—hereby* “ *tempting, and even provoking the divor-* “ *ced woman to marry another man—that* “ *though the personal guilt follows the per-*

* Mr. Salmon well observes, that “the gospel is a covenant revealing grace, not commanding a new morality.” Essay on Marriage, p. 134.

“ *sonal act*, with respect to her, so that if
 “ she, while her husband liveth, be married to
 “ another man, she shall be called an adulteress
 “ (see Rom. vii. 2.) yet the guilt of this
 “ adultery will also be imputed to him who
 “ was the wilful occasion of it, by *causing*
 “ her to commit it. And as to you, who,
 “ for the purpose of *exchanging your wives*
 “ with each other (a matter which the law of
 “ Moses, in a part of the passage which you
 “ refer me to, but which you don't mention,
 “ was particularly made to guard against*)
 “ have put away your wives—and to you
 “ who marry such divorced women—and to
 “ you divorced women, who think yourselves
 “ at liberty to marry whom ye will, when
 “ ye are unjustly put away from your hus-
 “ bands—Moses calls all this *defilement*, which
 “ is but another term for *adultery*:—there-
 “ fore I say unto you, as well as to those
 “ who, contrary to the law above-mention-
 “ ed, *take back again* the women they have
 “ once divorced †, after they have been mar-
 “ ried

* For this, saith *Abarbinel* on Deut. xxiv. 4. was to imitate the *Ægyptians*, who changed their wives, and took them again into their houses, which was the occasion of great filthiness; for, as *Isaac Arama* glosses, if this had not been prohibited, a gate had been opened unto vile men to make a trade of *changing* their wives, and thereby filled the land with *whoredom*.—See *Patr.* on Deut. xxiv. 4.

† Though the bill of divorcement wrought as a sort of divorce *a mensa & toro*, and as a release from the *vinculum externum*, or *outward bond*—yet nothing but *adultery* or *death* could dissolve the *vinculum internum*, which was created

“ ried to others—however ye may have been
 “ taught to abuse the toleration of divorce
 “ on particular occasions—that all the cases
 “ which I have mentioned, touching men
 “ divorcing their wives and marrying others,
 “ thereby causing their unjustly-divorced
 “ wives to marry other men—of men marry-
 “ ing divorced women—and divorced women
 “ marrying other men—this is all contrary
 “ to the law of marriage itself, as delivered
 “ to and pronounced by ADAM, Gen. ii. 24.
 “ as well as to the law of the *seventh com-*
 “ *mandment*, delivered to Moses, and by him
 “ delivered to the people at Mount Sinai.
 “ In short, these are only several * methods of

created by the special command of GOD—*they shall be one flesh*. Therefore, when a divorced woman went away from her husband, and married another man, she committed an act of *adultery* in the eye of GOD: but this dissolved the *first contract*, and made her the wife of the *second* man; therefore, if this man put her away, the first husband, of whom she had been the ἀπολελυμένη, (see Luke xvi. 18.) could not take her again without committing *adultery*;—for after her departure from him, under the *bill of divorcement*, she had become, by the husband's own act and deed, and by her act of adultery, another man's property, otherwise she could not be supposed (ver. 2.) to become *another man's wife*. The law therefore of Deut. xxiv. 1, &c. was especially made to prevent such abominable traffic.—See the preceding note.

* The reader may observe, that, in this paraphrase, I have endeavoured to lay before him every interpretation of the passage, which harmonizes with the meaning of the word נָאָה—*adultery*—as it is used in the *Hebrew* scripture; for it cannot be supposed that CHRIST, who is speaking of the law of Moses, should call any thing *adultery*, but that which is so by that law.

“ incurring

“ incurring the guilt of *adultery* ; therefore
 “ all the *salvos* which your consciences may
 “ derive from your abuse of *Moses's* permis-
 “ sion, with respect to *bills of divorcement*,
 “ however highly esteemed amongst men, are
 “ abomination in the sight of God. Luke xvi.
 “ 15.”—Here CHRIST puts the *Pharisees* to
silence, by the very law which they had par-
 tially quoted, with the hope of ensnaring
 Him, and making Him appear as an enemy
 to the law of *Moses*. We do not read of any
 reply which they attempted to make: this
 would certainly not have been the case, had
 they understood him to have spoken against
polygamy as *adultery* ; the *Pharisees* could have
 desired nothing more to their purpose, of
 representing Him as an enemy to *Moses*, as
 there was not a single passage in the whole *law*
 of *Moses* to have supported Him against them
 on that point. They were ready enough,
 on other occasions, to call upon him for his
authority as to what he *said and did*—See *Matt.*
xxi. 23. Mark xi. 28.—but here they are to-
 tally silent: and this under the only fair op-
 portunity they ever had, of convicting Him
 of a downright *falsehood*, as laying down that
 for *law*, which their law contradicted. It is
 therefore plain that they understood Him in
 no such sense. Neither did His own disciples
 understand Him to speak of any thing but
divorce.—They are said, *Mark x. 10, in the*
house to ask Him again of the same matter ; His
 answer was in substance the same: the con-
 clusion which the disciples draw from it is—

If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry—i. e. “If a man cannot get rid of his wife when he pleases, he had better not marry at all.” This conclusion must have been made from their understanding CHRIST to speak of *divorce*, for it is totally foreign from the matter of *polygamy*;—How could they possibly mean that a man had better have *no wife at all*, if he could not have more than *one at once*? It must likewise be supposed, that they did not misunderstand their *Master*, for if they had, He would doubtless have set them right in his reply (Matt. xix. 11, 12) and not have there said, what clearly shews them to have understood Him aright.

Now let us consider Matt. xix. 9. still more closely, taking it in connection with his subsequent explanation of it *to the disciples in the house*. Mark x. 10, 11, 12.

I say unto you—*Whosoever shall put away his wife—καὶ γαμήσῃ ἄλλην—and shall marry another*; ἄλλην must here have a reference to the preceding γυναῖκα, which we render by the word *wife*—therefore γυναῖκα must be understood as following the word ἄλλην, and this may be construed in the sense of ἀλλοτρίαν γυναῖκα—*another man's wife, i. e. a divorced woman*. We find the word ἄλλης, so used, 1 Cor. x. 29. ὑπο ἄλλης συνειδήσεως—which we rightly translate—*another man's conscience*. The learned *Wetstein* takes ἄλλην in this sense, in his note on Matt. xix. 9.—His words are—“Ἀλλην] i. e. Ἀλλοτρίαν ab alio itidem viro repudiatam

repudiata—vel ab illo divertentem, ut *Herodias* * & *Salome*.—" *Another*] that is—*another man's wife*, who has been repudiated by him, or who has left her husband; as did *Herodias* and *Salome*." He mentions

* *Salome* was sister to *Herod* the Great. She is said to have been the first woman who repudiated her husband. *Herodias* left her husband *Philip*, and married the said *Philip's* brother, *Herod Antipas*; for which *John* the Baptist severely reprov'd him, saying—it is not lawful for thee to have her. Matt. xiv. 4. For saying this, he had a double authority. First, as to the incest, Lev. xviii. 16. Secondly, with regard to her being *another man's wife*, Lev. xx. 10. *Herod's* situation was just what our LORD condemns in the passage of Mark x. 11, 12. He had put away his first wife, who was the daughter of *Aretas*, king of *Arabia*, that he might take his brother *Philip's* wife, with whom he had fallen in love; and he did this at the request of *Herodias* herself. This was putting away his wife, and marrying ἄλλαν, i. e. ἄλλοτριαν, *another's*, which was adultery; as was *Herodias's* leaving her husband, and marrying *Herod*. All this (except the incest) fell directly under the condemnation of the divine law, as explained by CHRIST to the disciples, and doubtless was meant by what he said before, in the presence of the multitude, to the Pharisees; and may serve as a proper illustration of the doctrine of the divine law, as set forth by our LORD, with respect to unlawful divorces, taking ἄλλαν in the sense of ἄλλοτριαν.

See also the case of *Drusilla*, a daughter of *Herod Agrippa*, who forsook *Azizus*, king of *Emesa*, and married *Felix*—(see *Acts* xxiv. 24.) also of her two sisters.—*Berenice*, the eldest, left her husband *Polemon*, king of *Pontus*, to go to others—and *Mariamne*, the youngest, was married to *Archelaus*, and forsook him to marry *Demetrius*, an *Alexandrian Jew*. Ant. Univ. Hist. vol. x. p. 643, and note E.

The above-mentioned women were of high rank and dignity; but doubtless others practised the same, who were of too low a degree to be subjects of the historian's pen.

afterwards

afterwards a difficulty he was under from this interpretation of ἀλλήν—as it seems to make the text say the same thing * *twice over*; and on ἐπ’ αὐτήν, Mark x. 11. he has the following note, which I will lay before the reader in *English*, referring the learned to the original.—*Against her.*] “ There are some
 “ who interpret this to relate to the *second*
 “ or *latter wife*, on whom the husband might
 “ commit *adultery*, properly so called; which
 “ he cannot be said to commit if he should
 “ marry a *virgin*, or a *widow*, but only by
 “ marrying a woman who had been in like
 “ manner (*i. e.* unjustly) divorced by another
 “ man. But there is an † objection to this
 “ interpretation,

* This objection is at an end, if the latter clause is to be left out, as in the *Cambridge*, and many other copies. See *Mills* and *Wetstein* on Matt. xix. 9.

† Since the first edition of this book, I have considered very deeply this objection of *Wetstein’s*, as well as the ground on which it stands. He certainly, when writing on Mark x. 11, 12. had the clause of Matt. xix. 9. in his mind, inasmuch as to confound it with Mark x. 12; but, on the most attentive consideration, I cannot think, with *St. Austin* and others, that the latter clause of Matt. xix. 9. viz. *He that marrieth her that is put away committeth adultery*, has the least *tautology*, even taking the ἀλλήν in the former clause in the sense of ἀλλότριαν—because the whole verse, taken together, is no other than a complete refutation of the *Jews* doctrine of divorce *for every cause*, and a full establishment of the truth which CHRIST is contending for—viz.—that no cause, but that of *adultery in the wife*, is any ground of *divorce* from the bond of marriage, so as to exempt the man who should marry her, living her husband, from the crime of *adultery*. In this view the whole will stand thus—viz.

—*Whosoever shall put away his wife* (except for *fornication*, which is the only thing which can dissolve the contract,

“ interpretation, which is, that by this
 “ method of interpreting the passage, the
 “ same

contract) and shall marry another (*γυναικα*, wife or woman unjustly divorced) committeth adultery (upon such woman—*ἐπ' αὐτήν*—Mark x. 11.) no unjust divorce dissolving her contract with the man who put her away.

Thus far the first clause—on which it might be supposed, that, as the first man had not only put away his wife by a bill of divorcement, but also married another divorced woman, and by that committed adultery, such an act released the first woman entirely from him, and therefore any other man might innocently take her to wife, as a woman divorced justly and entirely, the bond being vacated by the husband's adultery.—But our LORD declares it to be otherwise settled by the law; nothing but adultery in the wife could dissolve the bond of marriage, therefore, the act of the husband above mentioned, did not bring the wife into the state of a single woman, so as that she might marry again, living her husband—wherefore CHRIST adds—that *who so married a woman* under such circumstances of unjust and invalid divorce (*ἀπολελυμένην*—that had been put away in this manner) committed adultery, no act of the husband's setting her free from him.

This latter clause seems therefore as necessary as the former—in order to elucidate the whole doctrine of divorce, and to prove, that no one real cause or ground of it, so as to dissolve a marriage, existed on the footing of the divine law, but fornication or adultery in the wife; which appears also to be clearly laid down Matt. v. 32. with the spirit and sense of which scripture, this passage of Matt. xix. 9. exactly harmonizes.

In this view of the matter, this scripture, so far from condemning polygamy, rather establishes it; otherwise a man's taking a second woman, if such taking was adultery against the first wife, would set her free, and if so, a man who married her would not sin, for adultery is certainly a release, a *vinculo matrimonii*, with respect to the party against whom it is committed.

It may also be observed, that no possible case can be put of a man's actually committing adultery, but by intercourse

“ same thing would be said *twice over*, once
 “ at this ver. 11, and again at ver. 12.”

Here I cannot help dissenting from this learned and judicious man ; for surely a man's *putting away his wife*, and marrying another divorced woman, and a woman's *putting away her husband*, and marrying another man, are very different ideas. In both cases adultery is committed, whether the woman be unjustly put away from her husband, or she put herself away ; but when we consider, as in the case of *Herodias* and *Salome*, that this last was growing into a custom—for *Salome's* example was soon followed by others, as *Josephus* * writes—it was natural for CHRIST to condemn this in as *express terms* in one case as in the other, *both* being equally opposite to the law of GOD.

The *Jews* at this time had much intercourse with the *Romans*, *Judea* having been long reduced to the situation of a *Roman* province, and no doubt, in the very corrupt state in which the *Jews* universally were, the *Roman* manners easily insinuated themselves among the *Jewish* women. See before, p. 364, n. *Divorces*, though allowed very early in *Rome*,

tercourse with the *wife of another* ; for which reason it is a solecism to talk of his committing *adultery upon or against his own wife*, in any other sense, than by *causing, tempting, or prevailing* on her to commit it, which is the case put Matt. v. 32.

* See Ant. Univ. Hist. vol. iii. p. 149, at the bottom of the note.

were.

were never put in practice till about the year of *Rome* 520, which was before CHRIST 229 years, in the case of *Carvilius Ruga*, who divorced his wife because she was barren; after which they became scandalously frequent, as a corruption of manners prevailed in the *republic*, till the *Roman* women grew as licentious in leaving their husbands, as the husbands were in putting them away.—What was the character of the *Roman* ladies in this respect, we may learn from *Juvenal**, who wrote not many years after this time. In Sat. vi. he is dissuading his friend *Ursidius Posthumus* from marriage, by setting before him the monstrous practices of the *Roman women*, one of which was, leaving their husbands, and marrying other men.

Speaking of their *imperiousness*, he says, their grand argument, in all disputes with their husbands, was

Hoc volo—sic jubeo, sit pro ratione voluntas.

Imperat ergo viro:—

l. 222.

Then he proceeds——

* So from *Seneca*, who says—“ Who is now ashamed
“ of breaking the nuptial union, when so many ladies of
“ eminence and quality reckon their years not by the
“ number of *consuls*, but of *husbands*; and are divorced
“ in hopes of marrying, and marry in hopes of being di-
“ vorced.” *De Benef. Lib. iii. c. 16.*

Puffendorf observes, *Lib. vi. c. 1. § 15.* that the borrowing and lending of wives among the *Romans*, is a practice much talked of by authors.

——Sed

————— Sed mox hæc regna relinquit.
 * Permutatque domos, & flamma conterit. Inde
 Avolat, & spreti repetit vestigia lecti.
 Ornatos paulo ante fores, pendentia linquit
 Vela domus, & adhuc virides in limine ramos.
 Sic crescit numerus, sic fiunt *octo mariti*
 Quinque per autumnos; titulo res digna sepulchri.

“ So will I have it—so command I still,
 “ And yield no reason but my sov’reign will.”
 Then the imperious wanton leaves her spouse,
 From man to man she flies, from house to house,
 Forgetful of her bride’s attire, and bridal vows. }
 Again † she seeks her first-deserted man,
 And, in *five* years, *eight* husbands crown her plan.—
 Pity, but such atchievements should be known,
 Engrav’d on brass or monumental stone !

* *Permutatque domos*] Ab uno viro ad alium aliumque
 transiens.—*Going from one husband to another and another.*
 Lud. Prateus.

† This line proves that they did not wait for their
 husbands’ *death* to marry others, as does the next: for
 they can hardly be supposed to bury seven husbands in
five years.

Ovid, who lived a little earlier than *Juvenal*, censures
 the man who makes a scruple of his *wife’s* going to others,
 as unacquainted with true politeness.

*Rusticus est nimium quem lædit adultera conjux,
 Et NOTOS MORES non satis urbis habet.*

He that won’t lend his wife’s an awkward clown,
 Unskill’d in the *known fashion* of the town.

Martial, cotemporary with *Juvenal*, has an *epigram*
 which shews the liberties which were taken by a Roman
 lady.

*Mæchum GELLIA non habet nisi unum,
 Turpe est hoc magis, uxor est duorum.*

One spark serves honest *Gellia* at a time,
 But her *two husbands* are a fouler crime.

Martial vi. 7. speaks of a woman not above *thirty*
 years of age, who had been married to *ten* different men.

*Aut minus, aut certe non plus tricesima lux est,
 Et nubit decimo jam THELESINA viro.*

That this was a common practice, appears from l. 45, &c.

Quid quod & antiquis uxor de moribus illi
Quæritur? O medici! mediam pretundite venam!
Delicias hominis! Tarpeium limen adora
Pronus, & auratam Junoni cæde Juvencam;
Si tibi contigerit capitis matrona pudici.

What shall I say to him who seeks a wife
Of antient manners, uncorrupt of life?
Surely he's mad—come, Doctor, breathe a vein,
And try to bring him to himself again.
But if, by chance, a woman could be found
Modest and chaste, through all the empire round,
Thrice happy mortal!—to thy destin'd bed
Let her, with thanks to all the Gods, be led.

In short, such was the profligacy of the *Roman* women, that if one could be found fit for his friend to marry, he would call her a *Phœnix* as we say:

Rara avis in terris nigroque simillima cygno.

But to return to *Wetstein*.—"Others understand this $\epsilon\pi' \alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\varsigma$ of the *first* wife, to whom the husband might by his unjust divorce give occasion of committing adultery, or of flying to a second or adulterous marriage: but These do not explain what those words—and shall marry another—are to the purpose; since the divorced woman would be equally in danger of committing adultery, whether the husband who put her away, marries another or not. This difficulty came into my mind at *Matt. xix. 9*;
" but

“ but on considering the matter again, I do
 “ not think those words superfluous, but so
 “ to cohere with the rest of the sentence, as
 “ to denote, that though the *unjust divorce*
 “ was the occasion of the divorced wife’s
 “ *adultery*, yet the husband’s *second* marriage
 “ was the occasion of the *divorce*. For ex-
 “ ample—If a man, having met with another
 “ woman, who pleased him better than his
 “ wife, should, in order to enjoy the other,
 “ give his wife a *bill of divorcement*, and grant
 “ her liberty to marry any body else, whom
 “ she chose, would this be any thing else
 “ than to expose her to an *adulterer*, and to
 “ commit the crime of *pimping*?” So the
 Roman * laws—“ To act the part of a *pimp*, is
 “ not

* *Wetstein* remarks, on the title of *St. Mark’s* gospel;
 that *St. Mark* wrote his gospel at *Rome*—*Wetstein* says
 farther, *In doctrina de divortio manifestè ad jus Romanum*
respicit. “ In the doctrine concerning divorce, he ma-
 “ nifestly had respect to the law of the *Romans*.”

In the latter part of *Wetstein’s* note on *Mark* x. 12.
 p. 603, col. 2. he says—*Ex eo quod CHRISTUS de viis*
uxorès repudiantibus dixerat, Marcus infert—multo sce-
 lestius esse, si mulier virum deserat. Quod & *Roma-*
nis, quibus *Marcus* scripsit, licitum, & tum temporis,
 licentia supra modum grassante, familiare erat, post-
 quam *Messalina Claudii* Imperatoris uxor, *Claudio* vi-
 vente, filio publicè nupserat, & ipse *Claudius Octa-*
viam Cæsaris filiam *L. Silano* a patre desponsatam *Ne-*
roni collocaverat. Tacit *Annal.* xi. 27. xii. 3. 9.

“ From that which *CHRIST* had said concerning men
 “ repudiating their wives, *Mark* infers, that it was by
 “ far more wicked for a woman to leave her husband.”

This I do not see is deducible from the words of the
Evangelist; however *Wetstein* proceeds—

“ Which was permitted by the *Romans*, to whom
 “ *Mark* wrote, and at that time (licentiousness spread-

“ not less a crime than to make a gain by
 “ prostituting the body.—He who makes a
 “ gain of the *adultery* of his wife, whatever
 “ his rank or condition be, is punished as an
 “ *adulterer*.—If a man, in order to defame his
 “ wife, shall put an *adulterer* in his place,
 “ both the husband and wife shall, by law, be
 “ adjudged guilty of the crime of *adultery*.”

By all this it appears, that nothing kept this learned man from thinking, with those first mentioned, that the ἐπ’ αὐτὴν relates to the *second* wife, (who, to make the man guilty of adultery, must be a *divorced* woman) but his supposing, that in this view the same matter is repeated *twice over*, which it certainly is not. See before, p. . This makes him also, on *second thoughts*, differ from his own note on *Matt. xix. 9.* and take the ποιεῖται, *Mark x. 11.* in the sense of the Hebrew * Hiphil conjugation, as *causing her to commit*

“ ing beyond measure) was a familiar thing, after
 “ *Messalina*, the wife of the Emperor *Claudius*, had
 “ publicly married *Silius*, in *Claudius*’s life-time, and
 “ *Claudius* himself had married *Octavia*, the daughter
 “ of *Cæsar*, to *Nero*, who had been betrothed by her
 “ father to *L. Silanus*.”

All this may certainly account for *St. Mark*’s recording what OUR LORD said to the disciples in the house, touching *women putting away their husbands, and being married to other men*, which is omitted in *Matthew*.

* “ Mœchatur] i. e. Mœchari facit illam, nempe
 “ priorem a se missam. ex collat. *Matt. v. 32.* Facere
 “ recté dicitur qui facto causam præbet. Et mos est
 “ Hellenistarum verba formæ *Hiphil* per activa exprimere,
 “ ut *Rom. viii. 26.* *Gal. iv. 6.* *Pole Synop. in*
 “ *Matt. xix. 9.*”

“ Committeth

commit adultery, and so the husband, by *causing her* to do it, is *particeps criminis*, as an accessory before the fact, and may be said himself to *commit it*; as a man who hires, or causes another to commit a murder, is himself * guilty of murder;—as *David*, 2 Sam. xii. 9; *Abab*, 1 Kings xxi. 19.

This interpretation is not new; for *Wetstein*, on Matt. xix. 9. mentions some copies, in which for μοιχαται—*committeth adultery*, is red—ποiei αὐτην μοιχευθηναι—*causeth her to commit adultery*; and in one—μοιχαται—τστ' εἰν αναγκαζει μοιχευθηναι—*committeth adultery*; that is, *compels her to commit adultery*. I will conclude this point with observing, that, in all this, there is not the least hint or glance at

“ Committeth adultery] that is, maketh her to com-
 “ mit adultery, to wit, the former wife which he sent
 “ away from him; comp. Matt. v. 32. He is rightly
 “ said to do it, who occasions it to be done. It is the
 “ custom of the *Hellenists*,” (*Jews*, who spake or wrote
 in *Greek*) “ to express words of the form *Hiphil* by ac-
 “ tive verbs.” As Rom. viii. 26. where the *SPIRIT*’s
making intercession for us, is His causing us to pray in a
 right manner for ourselves; just as His crying *Abba*,
Father, (Gal. iv. 6.) is His enabling us so to cry. Ac-
 cordingly the *apostle*, Rom. viii. 15, speaks of Him as
 the *Spirit of adoption*, whereby we cry, *Abba*, *Father*. See
Guyse Paraph. on Rom. viii. 26. and note.

* Many exemplifications of this doctrine, as very sen-
 sibly and properly adopted into the law of *England*, ap-
 pear in our law-books; but in none more clearly, than
 in the case of *Lord Audley*, who was indicted for a *rape*
 on his own wife, he holding her while another *ravished*
 her;—he was *convicted*—and *executed*. He was likewise
 as evidently guilty of *adultery*, as the *ravisher* himself
 was. See *State Try. vol. i.*

polygamy, as *condemned*, or even *mentioned*, in these texts.

The learned *Grotius*, whom I have mentioned and quoted, at the beginning of this chapter, as maintaining a *new law* of CHRIST on the subject of *polygamy*, “ afterwards “ changed his opinion,” (see note “, on *Grot. de Jure*, lib. ii. c. 5. § 9.) “ as is “ plain from his annotations on *Matt. v. 32.* “ where he shews, that in that place, and “ other like passages of the gospels, *polygamy* “ is not condemned, but only the abuse of “ divorce, from whatever cause it proceeds.” Hence (adds *Barbeyrac*) in that excellent “ little work—*De Verit. Relig. Christ.*—he “ only says—“ The *Christians* follow the “ usage of the * *Germans* and *Romans*, who “ were

* *Grotius*, in the passage here alluded to, doth not quote *Tacitus* fairly, whose words are—“ *Severa illis matrimonia. Nam soli prope barbarorum singulis uxoribus contenti, exceptis admodum paucis, qui non libidine, sed ob nobilitatem, pluribus ambiuntur nuptiis.*” Which proves, that the *Germans* were, in a degree at least, *polygamists*. On voit par les dernières paroles, que, quoique cela fût rare parmi-eux, il y en avoit pourtant des exemples; de sorte que c'étoit plutôt une mode, qu'une chose regardée comme illicite. *Barbeyrac* on *Grot. de Jure*, lib. ii. c. 5. note 12. Fr. trans. “ One sees, “ by the last words, that though *polygamy* was rare among “ the *Germans*, there were however examples of it; so “ that its rarity rather arose from *fashion* than from its “ being looked upon as unlawful.” As to the *Romans*, they were also *polygamists*; for though they lived but with one, who was called *uxor*, a wife; yet their *libertæ*, and *ancillæ* or *servæ*, with whom they also cohabited, amounted to the same in point of fact.

“ were content with *one wife*. Lib. ii. § 13 ;
 “ and in the note there introduced, he only
 “ refers to 1 Cor. vii. 4.” This text, with
 the verses preceding it, we have very fully
 considered in the *last chapter*.

Since the first *Edition* of this work was
 published, I had a *book* put into my hands,
 the title page of which announces its being
 written on a popular occasion, that is to say,
 —“ the affair of *Lord Grosvenor’s* action
 “ against the D. of C.” This book is en-
 titled, “ Free Thoughts on *Seduction, Adul-*
 “ *tery, and Divorce.*” The author styles
 himself a *Civilian*, and, by many parts of
 the book, seems to be an adept in his pro-
 fession. His remarks are keen—his obser-
 vations shrewd.—There are some things in
 which he may be thought to have gone too
 far ; but there is a stricture on the subject of
polygamy, as vulgarly supposed to be pro-
 hibited by OUR SAVIOUR, Matt. xix. 9.
 which I will insert here, just as I find it,
 leaving it to my readers to make their own
 remarks upon it.

“ It is indeed pretended, that the strictness
 “ of conjugal discipline, supposed to be re-
 “ commended by the *apostle*, is confirmed by

Suet. in Vit. J. Cæs. saith—that “ he made a law, by
 “ which every man, for the sake of propagating chil-
 “ dren, might marry as many wives as he pleased.”
M. Antony had two wives at the same time. So had
Crassus, and doubtless many more, whose names have
 not reached us.

“ our SAVIOUR himself; who is conceived
 “ also to have prohibited a man’s having
 “ more than one wife, as well as a wife’s hav-
 “ ing more than one husband.

“ But this supposition is groundless: for,
 “ as I before observed, from our Saviour’s
 “ own words, *He came not to destroy the law*
 “ *or the prophets, but to fulfil them.* Now,
 “ under the law, polygamy was allowed; as
 “ plainly appears not only from practice but
 “ precept*.

“ In saying, ‘*Thou shalt not commit adul-*
 “ ‘*tery,*’ the law did not say—*thou shalt not*
 “ *have more than one wife*; as it does when,
 “ respecting idolatry, it says, ‘*Thou shalt have*
 “ ‘*no other gods but me.*’ It is said, ‘*Thou*
 “ ‘*shalt not lie with another man’s wife*;
 “ did not say—‘*Thou shalt not lie with as many*
 “ ‘*wives as thou wilt of thy own.*’ On the con-
 “ trary, it appears to have been commonly

* “ It were taking up the reader’s time to little pur-
 “ pose, to prove what is so generally known; the learned
 “ Selden, in his *Uxor Ebraica*, shews fully that a plura-
 “ lity of wives was not only allowed of among the *He-*
 “ *brews*, but amongst almost all other nations, and in
 “ all ages. In the *East* it was almost universal, as it
 “ remains at this day. The ancient *Romans* indeed did
 “ not practise it, though it was not prohibited. *Mark*
 “ *Anthony*, I think, was the first who led the fashion of
 “ having two wives. This fashion lasted between three
 “ and four hundred years, when it was prohibited by an
 “ express law, under the reign of *Theodosius*. The Em-
 “ peror *Valentinian* however permitted it in a fuller ex-
 “ tent; nor did the *Christian Bishops* of these times
 “ make any opposition to this reintroduction of polygamy.
 “ *Justinian* and the latter councils put a stop to it.

“ permitted

“ permitted to have *two* or *more*. ‘ If a man
 “ ‘ have *two wives*, *one beloved* and *another*
 “ ‘ *hated*,’ &c. Deut. xxi. 15. And again,
 “ 2 Sam. xii. 8, the prophet *Nathan*, re-
 “ proaching *David*, says, ‘ — *Thus saith the*
 “ ‘ *LORD GOD*, *I gave thee thy master’s*
 “ ‘ *house* and *thy master’s wives* into *thy*
 “ ‘ *bosom*.’ ”

“ It is true that, after the world became
 “ to be somewhat populous, and perhaps
 “ some communities apparently too nu-
 “ merous for the land they possessed, the
 “ * practice of *polygamy* was prohibited by
 “ the *civil magistrate*, for the *political* ends of
 “ *society*.

“ According to the laws of *Justinian*, it
 “ was not *lawful* to have *two wives* at a time,
 “ nor even a *concubine* with a *wife*. The
 “ *canons* of the church also confirm this pro-
 “ hibition, under pretence of its being
 “ founded on the words of our *Saviour*, in
 “ His reply to the *Pharisees*. But if we

* “ There are writers, indeed, who have laboured to
 “ prove, that *polygamy* does not tend to population. But,
 “ however ingeniously they have argued, they have
 “ contradicted all the experience both of ancient and
 “ modern times. If there are some countries, in which
 “ at this day *polygamy* is allowed, and yet they are not
 “ more populous than others where it is prohibited, the
 “ fact may be accounted for, by various other reasons.
 “ The desolation, occasioned by the plagues, wars, fa-
 “ mine, and licentiousness of those countries, would pro-
 “ bably have long since depopulated them entirely, had
 “ not *polygamy* been allowed.”

“ turn

“ turn to the text, we shall find that no such
 “ prohibition is there either expressed or
 “ implied.

“ *I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away*
 “ *his wife, except for fornication, and shall*
 “ *marry another, committeth adultery.* Matt.
 “ xix. 9.

“ Very true, but if, without *putting away*
 “ *his wife*, he *marry another*, (as was the case
 “ with *Jacob*; when, after marrying *Leah*,
 “ he married also her sister *Rachel*) it does not
 “ appear that he would *commit adultery*.

“ It is the *putting away* the first wife only,
 “ that made the marrying a second, *adul-*
 “ *tery*. Nor is even this a *direct* commission
 “ of that sin, but an *indirect* one; as such
 “ dismissal of the first would naturally tend
 “ to make her form a *connection* with some
 “ *other man*; which would be *direct adultery*.
 “ This is plain from the words, in which
 “ the same prohibition is expressed in another
 “ place, by the same *Evangelist*, ‘ *I say unto*
 “ ‘ *you, that whosoever shall put away his wife,*
 “ ‘ *saving for the cause of fornication, causeth*
 “ ‘ *her to commit adultery.*’ Matt. v. 32.

“ It is true that some of our most learned
 “ *divines* have been of opinion, that the adul-
 “ *tery* lay in *marrying the second wife*, and
 “ not in the *putting away of the first*. But in
 “ this they have shewn themselves to be
 “ better *canonists* than *casuists*. Even *Bishop*
 “ *Cofens* says, it is not the dismissal of the
 “ first wife that is *adulterous*, but the *mar-*
 “ *rying*

“ *rying of the second.* But this is clearly a
 “ mistake; not only, because *polygamy* was
 “ allowed at the time when our SAVIOUR’S
 “ injunction, respecting a man’s *putting*
 “ *away his wife*, was promulgated; but be-
 “ cause the contrary appears on the very face
 “ of the text.

“ The *Pharisees* did not ask *Jesus* about
 “ the *lawfulness* of a *plurality of wives*; but
 “ merely about *putting away their wives*: and
 “ though he answered them in a fuller man-
 “ ner than they seemed to require, he can-
 “ not be supposed to mistake the full drift
 “ and sense of their query.

“ The question was, ‘ *Is it lawful for a*
 “ ‘ *man to put away his wife for every cause?*’
 “ The reply is, ‘ *Whosoever shall put away*
 “ ‘ *his wife, except for fornication (and shall* *with*
 “ ‘ *marry another)* *committeth adultery.*’ That *for*
 “ is, indirectly, by depriving her of the pro-
 “ tection of a husband, and reducing her to *but*
 “ the necessity of accepting that of some
 “ other man; agreeable to the words of the
 “ text before quoted, *causeth her to commit*
 “ *adultery.*

“ Our Saviour indeed goes farther, and
 “ explains his meaning distinctly, in adding,
 “ *And whoso marrieth her which is put away,*
 “ *doth commit adultery.* But how so, unless
 “ the criminality depended on the incapacity
 “ of the first husband to *put her away*? This
 “ indeed made it *adultery* in the man marry-
 “ ing a woman thus unjustly divorced, be-
 “ cause

“ cause she was still the first man’s wife, and
 “ not lawfully separated *.

“ That this was certainly the meaning of
 “ our *Saviour*, cannot be doubted. *Moses*,
 “ says he, *because of the hardness of your hearts*,
 “ *suffered you to put away your wives*. Or
 “ rather, as the translators have more properly
 “ expressed it in Mark x. 5. for the *hardness*
 “ *of your heart*.

“ A mere *English* reader might, from the
 “ former expression of *Matthew*, take occa-
 “ sion to say, that the term *wives* in the plu-
 “ ral, is no more applicable to the individual
 “ than that of *hearts*; and that the former

* “ The legality of the divorce appears evidently to
 “ depend on the *fornication* on the part of the *woman*,
 “ which *ipso facto* dissolved the marriage; or, what
 “ amounted to the same thing, gave the husband a right
 “ to do it at pleasure, by giving his bill of divorce; and
 “ this seems to be particularly expressed in reply to the
 “ question, ‘ Whether a man might put away his wife for
 “ ‘ every cause?’ and also to the additional question,
 “ ‘ Why then did *Moses* command, to give a writing of di-
 “ ‘ vorcement, and to put her away; i. e. for every, or
 “ ‘ any cause?’—It is this circumstance, viz. the fa-
 “ cility of men’s divorcing their wives at pleasure, that
 “ accounts for the non-usage of *polygamy* in countries
 “ where it was allowed by law. It has been already
 “ observed, that the ancient *Romans* did not indulge
 “ themselves in *polygamy*, though permitted; but this
 “ was for a good reason: they wisely chose not to have
 “ two wives in the house at the same time, and therefore
 “ repudiated one before they took another; and this
 “ they did as often as they pleased, with no other for-
 “ mality than that of sending a message to the wife by
 “ a slave, giving notice of their intentions, after the
 “ manner of the *Hebrews*.”

“ word,

“ word, as well as the latter, must be meant
 “ of their *wives collectively*, and not of the
 “ *wives of each severally* : but the original is
 “ in both places the same—Προς την σκληρο-
 “ καρδιαν υμων—*Beza* has it—*pro duritia cor-*
 “ *dis vestri*—for your *hardness of heart*, in the
 “ *singular* number ; but it is *dimittere uxo-*
 “ *res vestras*—put away your *wives*, in the
 “ plural, conformable to the original.

“ That this is the true sense of the text,
 “ is farther confirmed by the remark which
 “ the disciples of *Jesus* made on it, in the
 “ succeeding verse.

“ It runs in the vulgar translation thus :
 “ *If the case of the man be so with his wife, it*
 “ *is good not to marry.*

“ But the version is here also palpably
 “ defective. By the *man*, may be mistaken-
 “ ly understood, a *particular husband* ; and by
 “ his *wife*, may in like manner be understood
 “ his *sole and only wife* ; but the word *his*, is
 “ *foisted* into the text ; it is indeed usually
 “ printed in *Italics*, to denote the *interpola-*
 “ *tion*. This prohibition is expressed, on
 “ the contrary, in the most general terms.
 “ *Si tale est hominis negotium cum uxore*, says
 “ *Beza* : conformable to the original—εἰ
 “ ὅτως εἰν ἡ αἰτία τε ἀνθρώπου μετὰ τῆς γυναίκος,
 “ not the particular case between *any one*
 “ *husband* and his *sole wife* ; but the matri-
 “ monial commerce (*negotium*) between the
 “ sexes in general ; or, as *Vasor* explains
 “ it, the condition or relative situation

“ of

“ of a husband respecting his *wives*. *Si ea*
 “ *est conditio viri, &c.*

“ If any other argument were necessary,
 “ to establish the sense of this reply, which
 “ our *Saviour* gave to the designing *Pharisees*;
 “ perhaps some confirmation of it may be
 “ drawn from the question, put to him
 “ by the *Sadducees*, with a design equally
 “ sinister.

“ *A woman*, say they (successively) married
 “ *seven husbands*, At the resurrection whose
 “ *wife shall she be?*—Had a *plurality of wives*
 “ not been permitted by the *divine law*, it
 “ would have better answered their end, if
 “ they had proposed the same problem, with
 “ a change of terms; and asked him, if a
 “ man had successively *seven wives*, to which
 “ of them, at the resurrection, would the
 “ husband belong?”

In justice to our author, I cannot conclude
 my quotations from him, without giving, in
 his own words, the *caveat* which he enters,
 against the practice of *polygamy*.——“ But I
 “ am not pleading either for the piety or
 “ morality of *polygamy*. Under the *Christian*
 “ dispensation, and in times like these, I
 “ conceive *one wife* to be enough, if not *too*
 “ *much*, for any one man. Add to this, that,
 “ whether it be contrary to the law of God
 “ or not, it is expressly contrary to that of
 “ man; being forbidden in *England* by the
 “ written laws of the land.”——Our author
 might have *strengthened* this part of his argu-
 ment;

ment, by adding, “ and by the *Canons* of the “ *Church of Rome*.”

To all the weight of evidence which has been produced against the notion of CHRIST’S introducing a *new law*, either with respect to *polygamy*, or any thing else, I will add one more testimony, and such a one as must carry its own conviction with it, even into the bosom of prejudice itself. Let us hear our LORD Himself, Luke xvi. 18. *Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, (* ἑτεραν) committeth adultery; and whosoever marrieth*

* On considering all that has been said, on *Matt.* xix. 9. *Mark* x. 11. and here on *Luke* xvi. 18, I do conclude, that if the *μοιχαλαί*—*committeth adultery*—be understood with respect to the second-taken wife—then the *αλλην* and *ἑτεραν* must signify, that she was a *married* or *unjustly-divorced* woman; for the marriage of a *maid* or a *widow* was never made *adultery* by the *law*, under any circumstances whatsoever of *precontract* on the man’s side.

If *μοιχαλαί* be understood with reference to the *first wife*, whom the man had *divorced* in order to take *another*; and if in this sense we are to understand the *ἐπ’ αὐτην*, *Mark* x. 11. i. e. with reference to the *first wife*;—we must then construe *μοιχαλαί* by *Matt.* v. 32, and suppose the man an *adulterer*, in the same sense as an accessory before the fact to a *murder*, is a *murderer*, by causing another to commit it.

The argument which has been usually drawn from *Matt.* xix. 9. by many learned men, is as follows:—“ If “ it be *adultery* for a man to marry a second woman after “ he has put away the first, it is not less *adultery* to marry “ a *second* while he retains the first.”—

But there are several faults in this argument.

1. *Petitio principii*, or taking that for granted which is denied.

2. Using the word *adultery* in a sense not warranted by the word *זנות*—*adultery*—in the Hebrew scripture, where it only signifies the *defilement* of a *married woman*.

marrieth her that has been put away (ἀπολελυμένην) from her husband, committeth adultery. This, say some, is CHRIST'S "new law, by which He forbad *polygamy*, which was allowed under the Old Testament."—As to the meaning of the words themselves, as they are much the same as in Matt. xix. 9. I will not repeat what has already been observed on that place; but as to their constituting some *new law*, we have CHRIST'S own authority to say they *do not*: for observe the preface at ver. 17. with which our LORD introduces them, wherein *He Himself* gives us to understand, that, what He *here* says, and of course what He says *elsewhere* to the same purpose, is grounded upon *the law of the Old Testament*. *It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.* Having introduced what He says, ver. 18. with this positive assertion touching the stability, unchangeableness, and perpetual obligation of *the law*, we must, to be consistent

3. A *non sequitur*, or conclusion which does not follow from the premises, unless, *divorcing* the first wife, and *retaining* her, signify *one* and the *same* thing.

4. A contradiction of the law of *Moses*—an inconsistency with the antient laws of the *Jews* as recorded in the *Pentateuch*.

5. A rendering the words *He that putteth away his wife*, which occur uniformly in Matt. v. 32. Matt. xix. 9. Mark x. 11. Luke xvi. 18.—which are all the texts on the subject—mere *surplusage* and totally *insignificant*.

6. The mention of *the putting away*, keeps the whole answer in direct agreement with the question asked—viz. —Is it *lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?*—which the other view of the text has nothing to do with.

ourselves,

ourselves, or to make Him consistent; construe what He says, as grounded upon *that law*, which *He Himself* lays down as the foundation on which He spake. This can be no other than the *law of GOD* as * delivered by *Moses*; what that *condemned*, CHRIST *condemned* on its authority; but had He *condemned* what that *allowed*, or had He *allowed* what that *condemned*, there was an end of that law, and more than a *tittle* of it must be said to *fail*—πεσεῖν—to *fall*—*perish*, and *be destroyed*. It may be worth our while to take a short view of the context:—ver. 16. *the law and the prophets were until John: since that time, the kingdom of GOD is preached, and every man presseth into it.*

As if our LORD had said: “Till the coming of *John the Baptist*—which was fore-

* A strong and striking observation might here be made—viz. that at the time CHRIST held this discourse with the *Pharisees*, the whole law of *Moses* was in its full force, even the CEREMONIAL LAW *itself*; to which CHRIST was subject, and which He observed, from the hour of His *circumcision* to His *last supper*, when He ate the *passover* with His disciples. Luke xxii. 15. Nor did this law *vanish away*, 'till it had its full accomplishment in the death, resurrection, and ascension of the great and glorious *antitype*; when, *having made peace through the blood of His cross*, Col. i. 20, *He entered in once into the HOLY PLACE, having obtained eternal redemption for us.* Heb. ix. 12. From whence it follows, that during CHRIST's ministry on earth, no part of the law of MOSES could, consistently with the character which OUR LORD sustained, be altered in a single *jot or tittle*—for *He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it*—this could not be, if he revoked or altered, but more especially if he *opposed*, any part of it.

“ told, *If. xl. 3. Mal. iii. 1.*—ye were under
 “ the teachings of the *legal* and *prophetical*
 “ dispensation; but since *John’s* coming, that
 “ *gospel*, which was prefigured by the cere-
 “ monial and typical rites of the *Mosaic*
 “ dispensation, and foretold for ages together
 “ by the prophets, is now openly declared.
 “ This is not confined, as the others were,
 “ to the *Jews* only; but multitudes of per-
 “ sons, of what nation or character soever,
 “ even publicans and sinners of the *Gentiles*,
 “ sensible of their sin and misery, shall be
 “ invited to partake of its blessings, and will
 “ eagerly *press* for an interest in them, though
 “ they be no observers of the rites and cere-
 “ monies of the *law*.

“ And yet the law is not hereby made
 “ void;—the prophecies, types, and shadows
 “ of the Old Testament, are fully accom-
 “ plished; the *moral* law is honoured and
 “ confirmed, its precepts explained, and all
 “ its commandments established as a law of
 “ My kingdom, as an eternal and unchange-
 “ able *rule of life* to all My subjects. There-
 “ fore *think not that I came to destroy the law*
 “ (*καταλυσαι*, *Matt. v. 17.*) to *dissolve* it, or
 “ loosen men from any of its obligations in
 “ point of obedience—*It is easier for heaven*
 “ *and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law*
 “ *to fail*—therefore, however you may have
 “ been taught to *make it void by your tradi-*
 “ *tions*, and especially with regard to your
 “ treatment of your *wives*, by which you
 “ are daily violating the *law of marriage*, in
 “ the

“ the unjust and scandalous divorcements,
 “ which your *rabbies* have taught you to
 “ abuse to the purposes of licentiousness and
 “ cruelty, yet the law of God *changeth not*,
 “ it is the same now as in the days of *Adam*;
 “ and therefore—whoever *puts away his wife*
 “ unjustly, breaks the *law* which commands
 “ him *to cleave* to her, and *puts asunder what*
 “ God *bath joined together*—and if this be
 “ done in order to *marry one you like better*,
 “ and under such circumstances of provoca-
 “ tion, as force the wife you put away to
 “ *marry another man*, she certainly sins against
 “ the *seventh* commandment, as does the
 “ man who takes her; but yet the guilt of
 “ *adultery* is not confined to them, but lights
 “ upon you also, who, by your unlawful
 “ treatment of your wife, in *putting her away*
 “ unjustly, *caused her* to commit it (see
 “ Matt. v. 32.) You are therefore answerable
 “ before God as an *adulterer*; for there is
 “ no difference, in the eye of *His law*, be-
 “ tween the *perpetrator* of a crime, and the
 “ *instigator* and *promoter* of it.”

In the above paraphrase on the context, I
 have endeavoured to take in the whole sense of
 the passage, as agreeable *to*, and reconcileable
with, the *law of the Old Testament*; for it
 was certainly by *this*, that our LORD regu-
 lated all His *thoughts, words, and actions*, on
 every subject, and upon every occasion, as
 well as in the instance of what He said,
 Luke xvi. 18.

Had CHRIST been to have introduced a *new law*, it must have appeared somewhere in *His* * *commission*: we have several transcripts of this, relative to all His *offices*, but not a single clause is there in any of them to † that purpose.

His commission as a *priest* appears in several parts

* In Deut. xviii. 18, 19. it is said—*I will raise them up a PROPHET from among their brethren, like unto thee, and I will put MY WORDS in His mouth, and He shall speak unto them ALL THAT I SHALL COMMAND HIM. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto MY WORDS, which He shall speak IN MY NAME, I will require it of him. And, ver. 15. The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a PROPHET in the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall hearken.* This general account of CHRIST's mission as a *Prophet*, seems to militate against every idea of His setting up a *new law* of *His own*. Had He done this, He had not been like *Moses*, who received the law from GOD, and delivered it to the people, but like *Mahomet*, who invented a *new law* of *His own*, in opposition to the law of GOD, and imposed it upon his followers as containing the only true religion and worship: whereas the *blessed JESUS* gave this test of His mission, John iii. 34. *He whom GOD hath sent, speaketh the words of GOD*—for the truth of this, His constant appeal was to the writings of the Old Testament.

I would recommend the consideration of what is here said, to those, who talk of a *law of the gospel*, more *pure and perfect* than the law of *Moses*. So spake Socinus, and, after him, too many in this our day—I have heard this, from more than one pulpit.

† If our *blessed SAVIOUR* came to overturn the law of *MOSES*, it is a little extraordinary that he should give so strict a charge to the multitudes, and to his disciples, to hear and practise it—(Matt. xxiii. 1, 2, 3.) saying, *the Scribes and the Pharisees* (who were the ordinary teachers among the *Jews*) *sit in MOSES' seat: ALL therefore WHATSOEVER they bid you to observe, (that is, ALL that is agreeable to the law of MOSES) observe and do.*

OUR

parts of the Old Testament, and is thus shortly summed up, Dan. ix. 24.—*To finish the transgression—to make an end of sins—to make reconciliation for iniquity and (thus) to bring in everlasting righteousness.*—As a prophet, says he, by Is. lxi. 1. &c. *The Spirit of the LORD GOD is upon Me, because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: He hath sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound: to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our GOD; to comfort all that mourn: to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He might be glorified.* There is nothing about a new law in this part of OUR SAVIOUR'S commission.

As to His *kingly office*, on which He entered after His resurrection from the dead, when He had a name given Him above every name, that at the name of JESUS every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that JESUS CHRIST is LORD, to the glory of GOD the Father—His kingdom was to be administered not by any new law, but by that which was from the beginning,

OUR LORD does not make the least exception, nor hint at the smallest innovation, but *παντα ὅσα*—*omnia quæcunque*—all things whatsoever—therefore, doubtless, relative to marriage, as well as to every thing else.

once written *on tables of stone*, but now to be written *on the fleshly tables of the heart*, 2 Cor. iii. 3. For thus saith the LORD—*This is the covenant that I will make with the house of ISRAEL; after those days I will put MY LAW in their inward parts, and write IT in their hearts, and will be their GOD, and they shall be my people.* Jer. xxxi. 33. Comp. Heb. viii. 10.

If CHRIST then gave a *new law*, or *rule of life*, He exceeded His commission, and we must call in question His veracity, as well as His sincerity, in that declaration of His, Matt. v. 17, 18, 19. likewise as to what he says, John xii. 49, 50. *I have not spoken of MYSELF, but the Father which sent me HE GAVE ME A COMMANDMENT, what I should say **, and *what I should speak—and I know that HIS COMMANDMENT is life everlasting*; (Comp. Rom. x. 5. Gal. iii. 12.) *whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me so I speak.* See Deut. xviii. 18, 19. In exact conformity with all this, it is said, Heb. i. 1. *GOD, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the*

* If the *Father* gave CHRIST a commandment to declare *that to be a mortal sin* against the *seventh* commandment, which was uniformly *allowed* as *innocent* under the Old Testament; this must infer either a *change* in the *divine mind and will*, or an *absolute contradiction*: this last is usually got rid of, as the *Mahometan doctors* get rid of the contradictions in the *Koran*—by their doctrine of *abrogation*:—for they pretend that “God commanded several things in the *Koran*, which, for good reasons, “were afterwards revoked and *abrogated*.” Thus do some of our *Christian Doctors* treat the Old Testament, in order to establish certain doctrines which they suppose to be taught in the New Testament respecting marriage.

Prophets,

Prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son. These words are expressly and particularly addressed to the Hebrews; and the whole subsequent epistle proves the uniformity and unchangeableness of the Divine will, and that the Christian dispensation declared none other things than Moses and the Prophets did say should come to pass. Comp. Acts xxvi. 22.

But to return once more to OUR SAVIOUR'S discourse with the *Pharisees*:—Can it be imagined that CHRIST, so remarkable for his precision, so thoroughly accurate in all He said on every other point, should use so little in this, as not to make Himself understood by His hearers? Nay—that He should observe so little precision, as not to *describe* an offence, which we are to suppose Him to condemn? The most flagrant instances, the most obvious and palpable definitions of *polygamy* cannot be understood from what He says.—*He that putteth away his wife, * by bill of divorcement, and marrieth another—does not describe a man's taking two wives together, and cohabiting with both; nor—a man's having a wife, and taking another to her, and cohabiting with both. Such was the Old Testament polygamy, not the putting away one in order to take ano-*

* This is the sense of the word ἀπολῦσαι. Matt. xix. 7, 8, 9; and it is to be remarked, that this ingredient of *putting away*, enters into the *definition*, and therefore into the very *essence* of the offence which CHRIST condemns; but it is very certain that it is not of the essence of *polygamy*, nor does it enter into the definition of it.

ther.—I do not recollect a single instance in which this was ever done during the whole administration of *Moses*, the *Judges*, or *Kings*, any more than a single instance where *polygamy* was forbidden †. However the law of *Moses* forbade what our SAVIOUR mentions, just as much as His words do. If a man once took a woman, he never (except for adultery) could *put her away all his days*; and though *Moses* suffered, in order to avoid worse consequences, *divorces* for other causes beside *adultery*, by not bringing the offenders to condign punishment in every instance, yet there never was an instance when the law of God did not condemn them. As for *polygamy*, *Josephus* says, and the Bible proves what he says to be true, that—“ It was the custom of the *Jews* to live
 “ with a plurality of wives; he calls it
 “ *παρποιν*—the custom of their country, deriv-
 “ ed from their fathers.”—The same historian, writing the account of God’s giving the deceased *Saul*’s wives to *David*, observes, that, “ God gave *David* many wives, which
 “ he might *justly* and *lawfully* have.” The *Pesicta*, on Lev. xviii. calls it, “ *notissimum*”—a thing most *notorious*, “ that He who said
 “ it was forbidden to have *more wives than*
 “ *one*, was entirely ignorant of the law.” See Grot. de Jure, lib. ii. c. 5. § 9. in the note k.

Is it then, without the highest absurdity, to be imagined, that CHRIST should mention

† Unless we understand Lev. xx i. 13, 14. to forbid it in the case of the *high-priest*, as the *Jews* commonly understood it.

and condemn *polygamy* in the presence of such multitudes of *Jews*, and in a settled dispute with His bitterest foes, the *Pharisees*, who only disputed with Him to ensnare Him, and to have whereof to accuse Him to the people as an enemy to *Moses* (for this was their grand point in their appeal to *Moses's* writings) and yet that we should not meet with a syllable of * reply to what He advanced, when they might have quoted the whole Old Testament against Him? that He should declare a thing to be *adultery*, without a single testimony from *Moses* to support Him in what he said? and this, when He never on any other occasion taught any doctrine but on the authority of the Old Testament, and constantly appealed to it for the truth of what He declared?

* Dr. *Whitby*, in his comment on Matt. xix. 9. says, “Here it seems evident that CHRIST prescribes a *new law*, which had not before obtained among the *Jews*.” This is the *πρωτον ψευδος*, the *grand mistake*, which runs through his whole comment on the passage, as well as through the usual and vulgar interpretation of it—But can any thing be more contradictory to every notion of *propriety*, than to suppose CHRIST “prescribing a *new law*—which had never obtained among the *Jews*” in order to restrain a practice which He proves to be forbidden by their own law, that of unjust divorce; and to prohibit *polygamy* as *adultery*, in contradiction to the law of *Moses*, which *allowed* it; more especially after declaring solemnly, that *He came not to destroy the law*—and that *not even a jot or tittle should pass from it*? To imagine CHRIST as correcting the *Jews* by a law “which had never obtained among them,” is an absurdity of the first magnitude; *For what the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law*, Rom. iii. 19; those who are not under the law (be that law what it may) have nothing to do with it.

Lastly,

Lastly. Is it conceivable, as CHRIST must be supposed to speak in *Hebrew*, that He should give a meaning to the language of the Old Testament, which, in all the writings of *Moses* and all the *prophets*, it never had? Now, wherever the verb *μοιχαλαί* is used in the *Greek* translation of the LXX, it constantly answers to the Hebrew *זנא*; and therefore there is no room to doubt, that wherever, in our SAVIOUR's discourses, as recorded by the *Evangelists*, we meet with the word *μοιχαται*, *זנא* was the very *Hebrew* term used by him: but no where, throughout the whole *Hebrew* Bible, is this word applied to a man's *marrying a second wife, living his first*, unless such *second* was either betrothed or married to another, or to any thing else, than only to the defilement of a *betrothed or married* * woman. This is its single idea throughout the whole. Therefore it is figuratively used to describe the people's *forsaking God, and turning to idols*. See before, p.

CHRIST said to the *Jews*, John v. 46, 47. *Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me; but if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?* It is not easy to conceive words more forcible than these, to express an absolute and unreserved appeal to the Old Testament for the truth of all CHRIST said

* Let any one take up an *English* concordance, and look at the word *adultery*, and he will not be able to find a single instance where it is applied to *polygamy* in any part of the Old Testament, nor in any other manner than the Hebrew *זנא*.

and taught in His *prophetical* character. In this character He stood before the *great multitudes* of the people and the *Pharisees*, while he was delivering, on the authority of the scriptures, the sense of those scriptures upon the matter of *unjust divorce*, and proving the criminal consequences of it to all parties concerned. He so proved His point, that His adversaries had not a word to reply. He silenced them as He did the *devil*, Matt. iv. 10, 11. by the *word of God*. But had He said *polygamy* was *sinful*, from which of *Moses's* writings would He have proved * this? The *Pharisees* might have retorted upon Him His own declaration and appeal to the writings of *Moses*; they might have said—"Thou hast said, that if we be-
 " *lieved the writings of Moses, we should believe*
 " *Thy words*—Thou hast said, that if a man
 " *having a wife, marrieth another,*" (for thus they might have put it, had they understood

* *Voltaire*, in whose writings on the scripture are to be found here and there a sensible thing, among heaps of folly and nonsense; has an observation which is worth attending to, viz. "We are told in *St. Matthew*, that
 " the great men, and the *priests*, and *all the council*, sought
 " *false witnesses against Jesus, to put Him to death.*

"Now if they were obliged to seek for false witnesses,
 " they could not charge Him with having preached
 " openly against their law." Treat. on Tol. Franklin's trans. p. 192. vol. xxxiv. But if CHRIST had preached against *polygamy*, as *adultery*, He would as evidently have preached against the law of *Moses*, as if he had preached against *marriage* itself, or as a *missionary* would preach against the law of *Turkey*, who should contend for the establishment of 1 Jac. c. 11. at *Constantinople*—and this, on the authority of the *Alcoran's* having prohibited *polygamy*.

Him

Him to have condemned *polygamy*) “ he com-
 “ *mitteth adultery*; but where dost Thou
 “ find this in *Moses’s* writings? they are
 “ filled with the *allowance* of what Thou
 “ *condemnest*, without a single exception :
 “ therefore, because we believe *Moses’s* writ-
 “ ings, we do *not* believe *Thee*.”

From all that has been said, I do conclude, that CHRIST was not a destroyer of the *old law*, nor a giver of a *new one*—that therefore the business of *polygamy*, and all other points relative to the *commerce of the sexes*, were fully adjusted and settled by the *divine law*, subject to no alteration or change whatsoever, by * any power in EARTH OR HEAVEN. For thus saith the SPIRIT—Eccles. iii. 14, *Whatsoever GOD doeth, it shall be for ever, nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it.*

Having now finished what I had to say on the subject of this *chapter*, I shall next proceed, on the footing of the *divine law*, to consider another material point relative to the *commerce of the sexes*, which is *Divorce*.

* ZUINGLIUS, in his letter on the subject of King HENRY’s divorce, says very truly—that “ the *apostles* “ had made no *new laws* about marriage, but had left “ it as they found it.” See BURNET, *Hist. Ref.* vol. i. p. 93.

APPENDIX TO CHAP. I.

Containing FARTHER THOUGHTS ON
Exod. xxii. 16, 17.

THIS scripture is usually understood very evidently to contain a law, that he who *enticed*, &c. a young woman, should be obliged to marry * her. To understand it in any other light, is to divest the most intelligible and plain words of their certain and obvious meaning. But it is to be observed, that the *damsel* must be entirely disengaged from any *betrothment* to another man; for if she were betrothed to another, then the man who defiled her could not marry her, but both he and she, if she consented to the defilement, were to be put to death, according to Deut. xxii. 23, 24; otherwise it is here said, ver. 16. *he shall surely endow her to be his wife, or for a wife to himself*, as—*לו לאשה*—may be more literally rendered. So *Josephus*—*Ὁ φθείρας παρθένον, &c. αὐτὸς γαμεῖτω.*—“He “ who defiles a virgin, the same shall marry “ her.” That is, shall pay the *dowry*, and so recognize and confirm the *marriage-obligation*,

* I would here be understood to take the word *marry* in its *popular* sense, as denoting some outward act of public recognition of the *marriage-obligation*, such as the payment of the *dower* among the *Jews*.

which

which had been created by his antecedently taking possession of her person.

From the 17th verse it is usually understood, that, *if the father refused to give her to him*, the man was to pay a satisfaction in money for the injury and disgrace he had done her : and though the law, ver. 16. appointed the marriage, both as a punishment to him that had done the wrong, and a recompence to her that had suffered the wrong : yet that there was an express reservation of the father's power (ver. 17.) if he refused his consent, it must be no marriage ; only the money to be paid as τὴν τιμὴν τῆς ὕβρεως—a satisfaction for her reproach, as *Josephus* speaks.

The *Jewish* doctors were very lax in their interpretation of this passage of scripture, who would not have it to be a command (ver. 16.) that he should marry her (though that was best) but only that he should make satisfaction for taking away her virginity ; which was by paying so much in the nature of *dowry* as would render her fit to be his wife if *both* of them could agree.

This interpretation of the 16th verse, is one of those arbitrary expositions of the *Talmudists*, which by robbing the text of its plain meaning, leave us to the uncertainty of human imagination, which being various in various men, must render the scriptures totally uncertain as to any determinate meaning whatsoever.

The 17th verse says nothing of the *marriage*, whether it *shall* or *shall not* be binding,

on the *father's refusal*; but only—"If the
 "father utterly refuse to give her unto him, he
 "shall pay money according to the dowry of vir-
 "gins." Here I take the words according to
 our translation—"If," &c. and supposing it
 (for argument's sake) to include a reservation
 of the father's authority, so that he might,
 even where matters had gone so far as de-
 scribed ver. 16. *invalidate* the contract, by
 withholding his *consent*—which, though in-
 sisted on by the *Talmudists*, is hardly recon-
 cileable with the peremptory and positive
 command, ver. 16.—yet this does not affect
 the principal point which I contend for, and
 which is contained in ver. 16; namely, that
 it is the taking *possession* of the woman's *per-
 son* which creates the *contract*, or *marriage-
 obligation*. Therefore, no man, agreeably to
 the divine law, can entice a *virgin*, *defile* her,
 and then *forsake* her at his *own will and plea-
 sure*, as is done every day among us in this
Christian land, where the law of God is sup-
 posed to be the rule of right and wrong, but
 is, in truth and in fact, put entirely out of
 the question.

I thought fit to lay these several expositions
 of this scripture before the *reader*, that he
 might the better judge how far I may be
 right in my views of it, which are before sub-
 mitted to his consideration, p. 25—28;
 and, at the same time, form his own judg-
 ment of the matter, from that which appears
 to him to be most agreeable to the context,
 as well as to the rest of the scripture.

The

The *apostle* tells us, *Rom. iii. 19.* *Whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law,* therefore no *Jew*, who by *circumcision* was a debtor to do the whole law (*Gal. v. 3.*) could be exempt from any part of it. For a like reason, the believing *Gentiles*, who are compared to *the olive-tree wild by nature, but grafted into the good olive-tree* (see *Rom. xi. 24.*) and become members of *God's church by the circumcision made without hands* (*Col. ii. 11.*) are certainly *under the law* as a rule of life, and therefore subject to its *moral precepts* in every instance. From hence it ought to be concluded, that *Christians* are as much bound by *Exod. xxii. 16.* and *Deut. xxii. 28, 29,* as the *Jews* are. No reason can be given to the contrary, which will not equally apply to their exemption from the *ten commandments*; for these were at first delivered, and *immediately and particularly* addressed to the *Jews*, as appears from the short preface, *Exod. xx. 1, 2.* But can there be found a man, *mad* enough to suppose, that because they were emphatically addressed to the *people* which *God brought out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage,* no others have any thing to do with them?

APPENDIX TO CHAP. II.

THE celebrated *Martinus Bucerus*, one of our excellent and learned *Reformers*, in *enarrationibus ad cap. 19. Libri Judicum*, has left us the following observation concerning *concubinage*; which seems to throw much light on the subject.

“ *Concubinæ erant legitimæ etiam uxores :*
 “ *sed hoc a matronis differebant, quod sine*
 “ *dote & sine solenni sanctificatione recipie-*
 “ *bantur : & erant ferè ex ancillis, & servilis*
 “ *conditionis : & non erant adjutoria illius*
 “ *præstantioris gradus, ut omni rerum com-*
 “ *munionem gauderent sed humiliore gradu,*
 “ *& quæ haberentur humiliore loco, quod*
 “ *ad administrationem domus attinet, & ad*
 “ *filiorum successionem.—Legitimum verò*
 “ *genus concubinarum est, quum habentur*
 “ *conjunctæ copula matrimoniali, ne abjici*
 “ *temere possint : tametsi non habeant com-*
 “ *munionem plenam omnium rerum cum*
 “ *marito, ut matres-familias : nec convene-*
 “ *runt pactis dotalibus, unde & nati ex illis*
 “ *non habent successionem in hæreditate pa-*
 “ *ternâ cum natis ex matre-familias : sicut*
 “ *Abraham ex concubinis veris uxoribus, sed*
 “ *non matribus-familias, dona quædam de-*
 “ *putavit, portionem hæreditatis nullam ad-*
 “ *dixit.—Ex legitimo genere concubinarum fu-*
 “ *erunt concubinæ sanctorum patrûm. Et*
 “ *quia DOMINUS dignitates & patrimonia,*
 “ *quæ suis contulit, conservari vult, optan-*
 “ *dum omninó ut hoc genus uxorum, uti*
 Vol. I. D d “ apud

“ apud sanctissimos olim Patres observatum
 “ est, rursus apud Christianos, & maximè in
 “ præstantibus familiis observaretur, &c.”

“ *Concubines* were also *lawful wives*; but
 “ in this they differed from the *matrons*, that
 “ they were received without dowry and a
 “ solemn sanctification. They were usually
 “ from maid-servants, and of a servile con-
 “ dition; and they were not *help-mates* of
 “ that superior degree, as to enjoy a commu-
 “ nion of things in every respect, but in a
 “ lower degree, and were reckoned in a lower
 “ sphere, as to the administration of the
 “ house, and the succession of their sons.—
 “ They are a lawful kind of *concubines*, who
 “ are joined to their husbands by a *matrimo-*
 “ *nial* tie, so that they cannot rashly be put
 “ away; although they may not have a full
 “ communion of all things with their hus-
 “ bands, as *mistresses of the family*, nor did
 “ they agree [or come together] by *dowry-*
 “ *contracts*; wherefore the sons born of them
 “ have not a succession in the heritage of the
 “ father, with the sons of the *mistress of the*
 “ *house*. Thus *Abraham* gave gifts to the
 “ sons born of his *concubines*, who were *true*
 “ *wives*, but gave them no portion of the
 “ inheritance.—The concubines of the holy
 “ fathers were of the lawful kind. And be-
 “ cause the LORD wills, that the dignities
 “ and patrimonies which He has conferred
 “ on His people, should be preserved, it
 “ is altogether to be wished, that this kind
 “ of wives, as observed among the holy
 “ *patriarchs*, might be again observed among
 “ *Christians*,

“ *Christians*, and especially in great and illustrious families, &c.”

There is much good sense in what *Bucer* says, not only as tending to give a scriptural and proper idea of *concubinage*, but also as pointing out a convenient *medium* between men of *family* and *fortune* being obliged to match with *inferior* women whom they may happen to *take*, so as to put them upon a footing with themselves and families, and the liberty of abandoning them to prostitution and ruin.

This hint of *Bucer's*, with respect to *Christians*, seems to have been taken in some parts of *Germany*; where we are told of *wives* of a sort of *second degree*, which they call *left-handed wives*; these are indeed taken with more ceremony, but, in other respects, differ little in their situation from the antient *concubines*. See *Chambers*, Tit. HAND—and MARRIAGE.

Dr. Alexander, *Hist. Wom.* vol. ii. p. 267, writes thus concerning this custom in *Prussia*
 “ —Though their code of laws seems in general to be as reasonable, and as consistent with sound policy as any in *Europe*, yet we still find in it an allowance given for a species of that *concubinage* which has long since been expelled from almost all the western world. A man may there marry what is called a *left-handed wife*, to whom he is married for life, and by the common ceremony — the only difference is, the bridegroom gives her his *left* hand instead of his right—but with this express agreement,

“ ment, that neither she nor her children
 “ shall live in the house of her husband, nor
 “ shall take his name, nor bear his arms,
 “ nor claim any dower or donation usually
 “ claimed by every other wife, nor dispose of
 “ any part of his property, exert any autho-
 “ rity over his servants, nor succeed to his
 “ estates or his titles ; but shall be con-
 “ tented with what was agreed on for their
 “ subsistence during his life, and with what
 “ he shall give them at his death. This
 “ privilege, however, is always in the power
 “ of the *king* to deny, and is seldom granted
 “ to any but such of the nobility as are left
 “ with large families, and, from the smallness
 “ of their fortunes, cannot afford to marry
 “ another legal wife, and rear up another
 “ family of the same rank with them-
 “ selves.”

There are certainly in the above very strong
 traces of the antient *concubinage*, which was
 allowed and practised under the *divine law*.
 If such a custom as this prevailed among us,
 and was enforced on men of *rank* and *fashion*,
 who are now turned-loose on the *lower order*
of females, and debauch them at *free cost*, with-
 out being under the least responsibility to-
 wards them—it would not only prove a hap-
 py check to the most mischievous licentious-
 ness in many instances, but be also a means
 of preventing the utter ruin of *thousands*, who,
 under the present *system* of things, are seduced,
 abandoned, and destroyed, without any *re-*
medy whatsoever, or almost any possibility of
escape.

